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THE

BRITISH WORLD IN THE EAST:

A GUIDE

HISTORICAL, MORAL, AND COMMERCIAL,

TO

India, China, Australia, South Africa,

AND THE

OTHER POSSESSIONS OR CONNEXIONS

OF

GREAT BRITAIN

IN THE

EASTERN AND SOUTHERN SEAS.

BY

LEITCH RITCHIE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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PREFACE.

"As one saith in a brave kind of expression, the sun never sets in the Spanish dominions, but ever shines upon one part or other of them." So remarked Bacon of a country which is now one of the least considerable of the powers of Europe, ignorant that one day the "brave expression" would be a simple truth when applied to his own. In like manner, it perhaps never occurred to Gibbon that the phrase he seems to delight so much in repeating, "the Roman World," might be adopted and modified with more than equal propriety by future historians of the British empire. Rome was great and powerful at a time when the rest of the world was mean and weak, but England is a giantess even among the proudest nations of the earth; and as for the extent of her territory, to use the felicitous language of Webster, "her morning drum-beat following the sun, and keeping company with the hours, circles the earth daily with one continuous and unbroken strain of its martial airs."

When the author of these volumes was invited to prepare a Survey of the British world in the east, he was at first of opinion that the comparative smallness of the space to which he was restricted would prove a disadvantage. But so far from this being the case, although it has unquestionably added to his labour, it has saved him from the imprudence of entering into competition with better writers, and enabled him to produce a work which will not be subjected to invidious comparison. The intelligent publishers saw that, at least in so far as the two principal countries to be treated of were concerned, a History, in the usual sense of the word, was not wanting: they desired rather to have the spirit and results of history in a form at once popular and practical. They knew, likewise, that meritorious Abridgments already existed; but at any rate they were desirous of avoiding the details of such indices which, by crowding the memory, render it difficult for the reader to grasp and comprehend the subject. The present work, therefore, aspires only to give the heads of knowledge; and the author trusts that there will be found in it the materials for correct thought even where he has been unable to use them aright himself, and that it may thus serve to stimulate the curiosity, expand the mind, and invigorate the judgment.

Thus much it has been considered necessary to say, in order to explain any paucity of names and other details which may be observed in the following pages. Few *events* of any importance have been voluntarily

omitted; but the reader is referred to other works for a personal account of the actors.

The same restriction must be applied to the commercial information; which is intended to give the merchant and economist an idea of the nature, value, and resources of the various markets, and thus to serve as an introduction to the circular and price-current that are to be found elsewhere.

In spelling proper names, the author has had nothing in view but the practical nature of his book. He has adopted, therefore, that mode of spelling to which he supposed his readers to be most accustomed; although in doubtful cases he has of course assumed the privilege of a casting vote. The Arabian prophet, for instance, he has called Mahomed by way of a compromise; although, if his own ear is to be trusted, Mŭhummud would be nearer the sound. As for the French Mehemet, it resembles nothing in nature but the bleat of a goat.

It needs only be added on this subject, that at the request of the publishers he has refrained from encumbering his pages with those notes and references, which, in the case of a book of greater pretensions, might be reckoned indispensable.

"Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Bermuda, and the Bahamas," says an American writer, "overawe and command the entire stretch of our Atlantic coast; while the West India Islands guard the entrance to the Gulf of Mexico, and Canada environs us upon our northern border:"—to which he might have added

that the Hudson's Bay territory extends backwards to the pole. But the eastern march of England is by far the most remarkable. Not to mention Gibraltar and Malta which dominate the Mediterranean, the whole outer coast of Africa is dotted with her settlements and fortresses; Ascension—Saint Helena—Mauritius—guard the intercourse of the two hemispheres; Hindostan is her own; along the shores of the Burman dominions, Siam, and the Malay peninsula are her ports and her cities; from Singapore she commands the Indian Archipelago; and in China her colony of Hong-Kong, with a magnificence of spirit worthy of her destiny, throws open to the world that commerce which her arms had made her own. But this is not all. A new continent spreads its prodigious expanse on the ocean between India and America; and there this modern mother of empires has already planted her standard round the coasts—east, west, north, and south—and the ceaseless hum of English industry mingles with the voice of the Pacific.

To describe the progress of this eastward stream, and the countries it fertilizes, together with those that lie near its course, is the object of the work now submitted to the public; and the author can only regret that the execution of the task is not likely to harmonize so well as he could wish with the greatness and utility of the design.

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THE
BRITISH WORLD IN THE EAST.

BOOK I.

THE HISTORY OF INDIA FROM THE EARLIEST TIME TO THE DOWNFAL OF THE MAHOMEDAN EMPIRE.

CHAPTER I.

INDIA AS KNOWN TO THE GREEKS.

The plateau of Central Asia is generally looked upon as the cradle of the human race. From this elevation numerous chains of mountains radiate on all sides, forming the skeleton of the continent, distinguishing climates, and laying out the sites of tribes and nations. From the same original centre, we are told, men first went forth to people the regions thus prepared for them by nature; and ever since, the torrent of population has continued to burst from time to time upon the world. The progenitors of mankind are usually divided by speculative

philosophers into different races, from whom their descendants are supposed to derive both their physical and moral characteristics; but others, insisting upon the natural equality of all human beings, derive them from one original stock, and ascribe the varieties they present to the influence of circumstances. According to the latter theory, the Hindoos might be regarded as merely a tropical variety of the Caucasian race; the islanders of the Indian Archipelago, again, as the connecting link between them and the Chinese; while the Chinese, Indo-Chinese, Japanese, Coreans, and the whole of the Tartar tribes, exhibit undeniable proofs of consanguinity.

The Hindoos are described by some as the earliest inhabitants of India, while others point to the various tribes still lurking in the forests, and in recesses of the mountains, without apparent connection in religion or manners with the body of the people, as being more likely to deserve the character of aborigines. When the wandering family of man, however, first found their way through the gorges of the Himalaya, it was in all probability in small detachments, which may either have been dislodged by succeeding and mightier tides of population, or may have fled to remote parts of the country at the appearance of a people to whom their ancestors had belonged, but whom they had now forgotten, even in tradition. The question, however, is of no moment in a practical work like the present. It is sufficient that the great body of the Hindoos form a tribe so peculiar as to be considered by some a distinct race of mankind. But their character, it cannot be denied, may have been preserved, if it was not impressed, by the nature of their habitat. Their country was at first the fertile banks of rivers and water-courses, all besides remaining a desert till the introduction of artificial irrigation. The movement of

population was no doubt rapid in a region where the command of nature to increase and multiply was seconded by warmth and abundance; the human tide must, in a comparatively early age, have overspread the sunny valleys of Hindostan; and must then have been hemmed in, or driven back upon itself, by the ocean and the Himalaya, the Indus and the Brahmapootra.

The limits thus casually mentioned would seem to be the true boundaries of the country; but the natural division of the task we have essayed requires us, before preparing to enter into the minuter questions of geography, to endeavour to convey some general idea of its grand geological distinctions. The idea, however, must necessarily be vague and incomplete, for the materials are scanty, and probably not so accurate as could be desired. India, in fact, may be said to be still unexplored by science; for our information has hitherto been chiefly derived from those meritorious individuals who, stimulated by natural taste and genius, have from time to time mingled nobler studies with their professional pursuits, and thrown upon war or trade the lights of philosophy.

The Himalaya chain is understood to commence to the northward of the city of Cabool, whence it stretches, under the Affghan name of Hindoo Koosh, to the confines of Cashmere, a distance of four hundred and forty geographical miles. Here it gives passage to the Indus, on the farther side of which, assuming its own more appropriate appellation (meaning the Abode of Snow), it pursues a south-eastern course, separating India from Thibet, till it is lost to observation in the unexplored country beyond Bhootan. It is supposed, however, to traverse afterwards the most southern provinces of the Celestial Empire, gradually sinking in elevation till it

reaches the Chinese Sea. This stupendous range is reckoned the loftiest in the world, affording, for at least a thousand miles, a series of elevations twenty-one thousand feet above the level of the sea, with various summits rising beyond that height about six thousand more.

The more elevated portion of the mountains, so far as they have been surveyed, are composed of primitive rocks, but more especially of gneiss, with only occasional veins of granite intermixed, and beds of micacious schist. The other constituents are hornblende-schist, chlorite-slate, and crystalline lime-stone, supporting clay-slate and flinty slate; with sand-stone towards the base, forming the southern steps of the chain. No trace has yet been discovered of volcanic action; and these sublime mountains may be supposed to retain the identical shape they received when the crust of the globe was first formed. Neither are their elevated parts subject to the vicissitudes of the seasons which elsewhere change the aspect of nature. No rain falls upon their heads, to freeze into glaciers, and be again dissolved into torrents, but their peaks of primitive rock are covered with eternal snow. In the names given to different parts of the range—Himadri, Himarat, Himachil, and Himalichil—snow is always the distinguishing expression. Himalaya (the grand collective appellation), it need hardly be added, is one of the gods of the country, the father of the holy Gunga, and the step-father of Siva the Destroyer.

Running for a certain distance nearly parallel with this range, there is another of inferior elevation, composed of the same materials, but with sand-stone as the principal surface rock, which forms the southern barrier of the valley of the Ganges and Jumna.

There are also three mountain ranges disposed in a very remarkable manner along the sides, and across the base

of Peninsular India.* The western, or Malabar range, commences at Kandeish, and stretches along the coast, at a distance averaging about forty miles, till it terminates near Cape Comorin, overlooking the Indian Ocean. During this course, the primitive rocks are frequently seen above the surface, sometimes in peaks of granite six thousand feet (and one, it is said, seventeen hundred feet more) above the level of the sea; but the distinguishing geological feature is the superincumbent trap in the northern part of the range, and the iron clay, or laterite in the south. The former of these basaltic formations confers upon the landscape a character of wild and romantic beauty, the hills sometimes rising in vast terraces, and sometimes in tabular masses, with deep gulfs between; the whole clothed with forests of teak, and the other majestic trees of India.

The primitive rocks of the Continent rise again in the island of Ceylon, the elements, however, which compose them being frequently in such unusual proportions as to confuse the geologist. Quartz, hornblende, and dolomite are found, but not in mountain masses; with the recent formations of lime-stone and sand-stone, the latter forming a belt round the whole island, between low and high-water mark. The mountains here are in continuous chains, like those of the main land, and rise in some cases to the elevation of five thousand feet, with one or two peaks a thousand feet higher.

Returning to the Peninsula, the eastern, or Coromandel range commences at the valley of Coimbatoor, where it may be said to issue from the western, or Malabar range; and it extends northward to about the same latitude, where the latter begins. Its general elevation is lower,

* No part of India is a peninsula, but the application of the name is now so generally received, that it would be difficult to get rid of it.

and for this reason the rivers which have their sources in the lofty table land between the two ranges (which are commonly, though improperly termed ghauts) descend, with few exceptions, through its valleys and gorges into the Bay of Bengal. The loftiest portions yet surveyed, do not greatly exceed three thousand feet. The sides and base of the mountains are composed of granite, gneiss, and mica slate, interspersed occasionally with clay slate, horneblende slate, flinty slate, chlorite and talc slate, and primitive or crystalline lime-stone.

The Vindhya range stretches across the country in such a manner as to form the base of an irregular triangle, the two other sides of which are the Coromandel and Malabar chains. The Vindhya mountains, however, have comparatively little geological connexion with the peninsula farther than the Krishna river, and should rather be considered as a portion of the general scheme of Central India. The grand and peculiar feature of the whole of this surface is the superincumbent trap, which is said to cover an area of two hundred thousand square miles. The other rocks are granitic, with sand-stone; but the whole of India is peculiarly barren of more recent formations than the latter. The coal strata are numerous throughout the entire country; but of these and other mineral riches, we shall have to treat in another place. A thing worthy of mention, however, and hardly susceptible of explanation is, that the rarity of organic remains, both in the stratified rocks and diluvial soil, is the most striking phenomenon in Indian geology.

Connected with the western limits of the Vindhya range, by a curved line of hills, are the Aravulli mountains, which stretch almost to Delhi, and serve as a barrier between Central India and the western desert. These mountains rarely exceed two thousand feet above

the level of the sea, although Mount Aboo, in the neighbourhood, is supposed to rise to the height of five thousand. Their composition is granite, including sienite.

The Indian Desert, a geological feature of a different kind, but quite as remarkable as the others, extends laterally from the Aravulli range to the valley of Sinde. On the north it meets the valley of the Sutledge, and on the south is lost in the Runn, or great salt marsh of Cutch. From Hyderabad, as far north as Ooch, in looking eastward from the river, the visible horizon is a bulwark of sand, frequently two hundred feet high, guarding the valley of the Indus like the wall of a fortress. This is the commencement of the Desert, which is well characterized by its native name, Maroosthali, or the Region of Death. It consists, with the exception of a few oases, of hills of loose and heavy sand, which sometimes change their position and shapes at the caprice of the wind, and which, but for the intervention of the Aravulli mountains, would long ago have submerged the whole of Central India. The Runn is an immense morass of salt and mud, the area of which is estimated at eight thousand square miles. The salt deposits are chiefly formed by the river Looni, rising in the Aravulli; and in some places the incrustations are so thick as to have the appearance of snow. This line of desert, whether of land or salt, stretching northward to the Sutledge, is the grand defence of India on the west. It is skirted by the valley of the Indus, beyond which the sandy desert is continued. The country of the Punjab, therefore, forming the north-west corner between the desert and the Himalaya, affords the only point of access in this direction for an army.

It is obvious that a region so securely enclosed within natural barriers must have remained for a considerable

period unknown to the rest of the world. Before the veil was withdrawn India had arrived at maturity; and the wandering Europeans found, in the country of the Eastern "barbarians," a civilization as refined as their own, though so strange and peculiar as to perplex as much as it astonished them. Long before this period, however, the productions of India were known in the west by means of the southern Arabians, who appear to have been the first carrier-merchants of the world; and even that early caravan which purchased the favourite son of Jacob for twenty pieces of silver was loaded with "spiceries" as well as the balm and myrrh of Canaan and Arabia. But in the first ages of foreign commerce the dealers knew little of each other, their transactions being carried on with mutual distrust, and frequently in profound silence; and for this reason the wealthy and voluptuous Egyptians continued for centuries to enjoy the luxuries of the East without learning anything of the country whence they derived them.

Five hundred and fourteen years before Christ, Darius the son of Hystaspes, if we may depend upon the sole authority of Herodotus, extended the Persian sovereignty to the Valley of the Indus; but even if there is no exaggeration in this statement, the fact does not seem to have dissipated in any considerable degree the ignorance which prevailed respecting the country and the people. One hundred and eighty-seven years later, however, Alexander the Great obtained at least a glimpse of that region of mystery which had so long stimulated the curiosity of the world. After establishing his authority in Persia, the conqueror marched towards the Indus by the way of Candahar, and probably Cabool, and crossed the river at the site of the present city of Attock. The Jailum he is supposed to have passed at Rotas, the

Chenaub probably lower down, and the Ravee at Lahore. These three rivers are mentioned in classical story as the Hydaspes, the Acesines, and the Hydraotes. He proceeded thence to the Sutledge (Hyphasis), where his encampment is supposed to have been somewhere between Adjodin and Debalpoor: at all events it must have been as far southward as the commencement of the Desert. He next re-crossed the Ravee and encamped on the banks of the Chenaub till the flooding of the country in the rainy season compelled him to move higher up, to so great a distance that five days were afterwards occupied in dropping down the river to its confluence with the Jailum. He next proceeded to Moultan and Ooch, and descended the Indus to Patala, the modern Tatta; whence he turned away with his army to return through the desert to Persepolis, leaving Nearchus to conduct the fleet along the coast to the Euphrates.

This expedition threw some light upon the condition of the frontier countries of India, but the vast region within the boundary line remained still a land of dreams. Even the intelligence collected, apparently with so much care and minuteness, by Alexander's officers respecting the Punjab and the Valley of the Indus, must be received with caution. The army was harassed by numerous and powerful enemies, and suffered so greatly by the rains and inundations peculiar to a season of the year when the operations even of the native troops are suspended, that at length its vexation terminated in downright mutiny. This could not have induced a state of mind favourable for general inquiry; and accordingly we find the casualties of the seasons described with a minuteness which is true to this day, while the reports concerning the inhabitants, their numbers, manners, and institutions, may reasonably be suspected of exaggeration.

A modern Indian might in his person be taken for the original of the portrait drawn by Alexander's generals of the Hindoo of the Valley of the Indus; but this fidelity in a matter which came under the cognizance of the senses, is no reason why we should bestow implicit confidence upon the fact reported by Arrian on the same authority, that India to the west of the Sutledge was inhabited by one hundred and eighteen nations, or that the kingdom of Porus, one of the princes of the Punjab whose dominions consisted of the doab between the Jailum and the Chenaub, contained three hundred cities. All we can say with truth is, that the country was populous; that the inhabitants lived under regularly-constituted governments; that some of the more striking customs and institutions of the people, such as the sati, and the distinctions of caste, were the same as in our own day; and that a considerable traffic was in all probability carried on throughout the Punjab, and down the whole course of the Indus.

As for the country now called Hindostan, it appears to have been divided among various petty princes, although one powerful kingdom, known to the Macedonians as the territory of the Prasij, extended for some distance on both sides of the Ganges. This people were prepared to oppose the western adventurers with an army of twenty thousand cavalry, two hundred thousand infantry, two thousand armed chariots, and many elephants; a force greatly superior to that of Alexander himself, which, when he descended the Indus, consisted of a hundred and twenty thousand men and two hundred elephants. It is probable, however, that the powers of Central India had heard as little of the Macedonian hero as he had of them; or if any report at all reached them of his advent, they perhaps looked upon the event with more curiosity than

dread. After leaving the Punjab, he had no further opportunity of acquiring a knowledge of the inner country, for the great desert of Maroosthali intervened; and on his part he left no memorials whatever of his visit. His footsteps may be said to have been lost in the inundations of the Indus. His march elsewhere may be traced to this day by the tumuli and coins which are found in its course; and if the written history of the expedition were lost, the traveller, judging by the monuments and sites of forgotten cities, might be able at least to say, "Here passed a conqueror." But on the line of the Indus, where so many stupendous events took place, —where Alexander, sweeping down the magnificent river with his fleet of two thousand vessels and his long array of warriors and elephants marching on either bank, probably felt himself in a position of greater dignity than he had ever occupied before,—and where the ambitious spirit, which, unsatisfied with the honours of earth, aspired to a place even among the gods of his country, felt no doubt its fiercest cravings after posthumous fame,—here a few uncertain etymologies are all the evidences of his career. The histories of Aristobulus and Ptolemy the son of Lagus live again in the pages of Arrian and Quintus Curtius; but not one monument, not one physical fragment of antiquity, however minute, survives on the banks of the Indus to attest the facts they chronicle. This mighty and capricious river has obliterated the traces of the hero, but the revolutions of two thousand years have left those of the author as distinct as ever.

After the death of Alexander, the countries on the west of the Sutledge, which had been annexed to the Macedonian dominion, made no effort to regain their independence; but the Gangetic people we have mentioned, the Prasij, had not relaxed from their warlike

attitude, and Seleucus undertook in person an expedition against them. He is supposed to have succeeded in penetrating into Hindostan, but no authentic record of this event has come down to our time. He concluded a treaty, however, with Sinsarchand, the king of the Prasij, whom the Greeks called Sandracotta, by which both parties retained their territories. Seleucus afterwards sent Megasthenes (one of Alexander's officers) as his ambassador to Sandracotta; but the mixture of truth and fable in such parts of his relation as are preserved by Strabo and others, renders him of little use as an authority. In some geographical points he is sufficiently correct; but he tells also of men who used their enormous ears for a cloak, who were born with only one eye, who were without noses, or mouths, whose heads were shaped like a wedge, who were only three spans in height. Another embassy, attended with even smaller results in the acquisition of knowledge, was the last communication of the Syrian kings with India. They appear to have abandoned their possessions in the Punjab and on the Lower Indus soon after the death of Seleucus, but at what precise date, or under what circumstances, is unknown.

The intercourse of the princes of Bactria, a Greek kingdom, between the Punjab and the Caspian, is in like manner involved in obscurity. Some say that they recovered the delta of the Indus subdued by Alexander, and lost by his successors; and some, that they made extensive conquests even in the heart of India. No more trace, however, was left by them than by the hero, of some inconsiderable fragments of whose empire theirs was formed; and after the latter had existed for about a hundred and thirty years, a horde of Tartars from the confines of China swept away for ever from that part of Asia the dominion of the Greeks.

From this period to the invasion of the Mahomedans the political history of the extraordinary people whose destinies we have undertaken to sketch is a blank, which the learned have in vain endeavoured to fill up. During a great part of the space their own chronicles are silent, although to make up for this they are surprisingly minute in their description of the events of myriads of years before. Shut up by natural barriers from the rest of mankind, their imagination had full leisure to expatiate in the abysm of antiquity. Possessing no relations with other countries, which elsewhere serve for evidences and corrections of history, they were able to construct without contradiction a chronology of their own. But no people in the world had less need of exaggeration in that point; for it is evident that in the time of Alexander the Great their civilization had already reached its culminating point, after which all is degradation, however slight, and decline, however gradual.

The Hindoo chronology cannot be received in part and rejected in part, for it is perfect in its construction: we must believe it to be either a sequence of facts, or a well-imagined fiction. Those writers who use this very perfection as an argument in its favour, forget that the Brahmins are as perfect in other matters about which they can know as little. Their system of geography, for instance, with its seven deeps, or continents, separated from each other by an almost infinite ocean, is not more wild than their system of mortal time: and it is not more true. The sea, in fact, was to this hermit nation, a field as vague and limitless as the Past, and they plunged into both with all the fervour of an oriental imagination.

If we receive no guidance, however, from the native chroniclers, we are at least able to determine, as nearly as is necessary, the social position of the people when

they first came in contact with Europeans, and to deduce from historical analogies that it must have taken many centuries to attain to the pitch of civilization to which they had arrived.

The extravagant accounts given by the ancients, however, of the virtue, wisdom, and happiness of the Indians, must be classed with their report of the stature of the Punjab nations. The former, they tell us, were philosophers, and the latter giants; by which we merely understand that Porus and his subjects were tall, and the people generally prosperous, and living under an orderly government. The laws themselves, however, have come down to our day, and they throw a still more distinct light upon the condition of the inhabitants of India long before the dawn of authentic history.

The laws of Menu, the date of which may be vaguely stated at about a thousand years before Christ, evidently refer to a nation long past the age of barbarism. Among the subjects of legislation are the interest on loans, and the nature of pledges and other securities; the division of heritable property, partnership in business, purchase and sale, non-performance of agreements of various kinds, slander, disputes between husband and wife, respect and politeness, and other matters which could occupy the attention only of a people in an advanced stage of civilization. It should be remarked, however, that a body of laws does not form national character, but is formed by it. In all probability, the code of Menu merely reduced to writing, in a collective form, the existing regulations of the country; and this is the more probable, from the religious respect which they inculcate throughout to "immemorial custom." If at the date of the compilation, the Hindoos had been in a state of barbarism within the memory of man, this remarkable injunction would never

have been given. The laws of Menu, therefore, although indicating the state of civilization a thousand years before the Christian era, render us little or no assistance in determining how long that state had then existed; and the question of the antiquity of their refinement will probably remain for ever a debatable ground for the speculations of the learned. All we know is, that at some period so remote as to mock the usual calculations of chronology, the Hindoos must have attained to a high degree of civilization, although its *kind* may be hardly intelligible to another people, refined not like them by the revolutions of time, but by the collisions of the world. The grand distinctive feature in Hindoo civilization, and the circumstance to which it owes its arrest at a certain point of progress, is the system of caste. Among other ancient nations the same system existed, however differently modified, at the commencement of the march of refinement; but with them, after having performed its office, it gradually gave way under the influence of circumstances. Among the Hindoos, on the contrary, it was part and parcel of the religion of the country; it could only be overwhelmed in the ruins of the temples; and it therefore grew with the growth, and strengthened with the strength of civilization. The Brahmin proceeded from the mouth of the Divine Being, and it was his province to pray, to read, and to instruct,—to be, in fact, the representative of God upon earth; the Chsatrya issued from his arm, and it was his to fight and to govern; the Vaisya from his thigh or belly, and his duty it was to provide the necessaries of life by agriculture and traffic; the Sudra from his feet, and his portion was labour and servitude. This classification belonging essentially to an early stage of society, was not, as elsewhere, a mere step, however important, in the progress of the nation,

for it existed, as we have said, in the permanence of the Brahminical faith itself. After permitting, therefore, as much scope as was possible, under the circumstances, to the natural expansiveness of the human mind, it operated like a chain upon the people, confining their social progress within a certain limit, which only its rupture could permit them to pass.

Let us observe further, for this is an important point which seems to have received little attention from historians, that it is to the same system of caste, and neither to the nature of their climate, nor the indolence of their disposition, that we ought to attribute the supineness of the great body of Hindoos under foreign invasion. The standing armies of the princes comprehended, it is to be supposed, nearly the whole of the soldier caste, and the great mass of the people were not merely ignorant of the use of arms, but forbidden to use them. The merchants, husbandmen, and artificers, had no sympathies in common with the fighters. Their occupation was as much forbidden to them as that of teaching or governing; they had nothing whatever to do with it; and they cared little about the event of a battle, provided they were permitted to buy and sell, and labour as usual. After a defeat, the soldiers had no resources to fall back upon, no allies to fly to, no recruits to muster, and it was hopeless to rally. A single battle, therefore, was sufficient to decide the fate of an empire; and the myriads of the people, taught from infancy to believe that it was not their province to interfere, submitted without a murmur to a new dynasty of which perhaps they knew not the name.

It is related by Strabo, that while two hostile armies were fighting in one field, the peasants were ploughing or reaping in the next field in perfect tranquillity; and from this fact Robertson takes occasion to eulogise

the paternal nature of the government "which paid such attention to all the different orders of which the society was composed, particularly the cultivators of the earth." It is manifest, however, that this form of government was originally adapted only for a rude people isolated from the other nations of the earth. Their first collision with a different race was fatal. The first blow struck at their empire by warriors who acknowledged no such laws of caste or of religion, laid it prostrate in the dust.

After the supposed Bactrian expeditions into India, the natives of the west appear to have relinquished all thoughts of conquest, and to have contented themselves with the peaceful emulation of trade. This intercourse we shall treat of at large in another place; but before dismissing the subject of ancient India, in its political phasis, we are tempted by the paucity of materials just to mention the visit of the sophist, Apollonius Tyaneus, three-hundred and seventy-three years after Alexander's expedition. This strange person, if we are to believe his biographer Philostratus, on entering the Punjab, found himself in the dominions of the very beau ideal of a royal philosopher. He was surprised at the noble simplicity of the palace of Phraotes, but observing no guards, nor other ensigns of royalty around, he supposed it to be the house of some noble citizen. Being undeceived, however, he entered with three or four persons who demanded an audience; and struck with the majestic air of the king, who was accompanied by a very slender retinue, he accosted him through an interpreter, and congratulated him on his apparent attachment to philosophy. "The law and my own taste," replied the prince, "alike keep at a distance from me the vanities of royalty. I use with moderation the little our ancestors have permitted us to have, and although one of the most puissant of monarchs,

I am contented with that little. But it is not only to my friends that I give up a portion of my riches, for I abandon, also, a portion to my enemies, that they may suffer my subjects to live in tranquillity. I drink no wine but when making libations to the sun. I give away the spoils of the chase, finding my own reward in the exercise. A few vegetables are my ordinary food." The King then dismissed the rest of the company, and becoming more familiar, addressed him in Greek, and begged Apollonius to entertain him at supper. This the astonished stranger would not hear of; and the royal philosopher, at length, modestly consenting to appropriate to himself the honour of exercising hospitality, gave him an elegant entertainment, accompanied with music.

This simplicity, however, was sometimes contrasted by the opposite vice, an example of which is given by Philostratus himself; but the most remarkable example of luxury and effeminacy is to be found in Quintus Curtius and Strabo, on the authority of Onesicritus, who accompanied the expedition of Alexander. The king of the country near the Delta of the Indus was continually surrounded by a train of women. He was passionately fond of the chace, but in following it did not alight from his chariot, he and his concubines shooting with the bow as they sat. Censers of silver were carried before him to perfume the road, and branches covered with singing birds waved around him. While giving audience to ambassadors, and judging causes, his women were occupied in combing his hair and perfuming his feet and hands; and so jealous was he withal that the crime of earnestly looking at these handmaids, or approaching them within a certain distance, was punished with death.

Such were the tales with which the ancient world was entertained respecting India. On both sides they no

doubt possessed some foundation in truth; but when the light of history begins to reappear, we shall see that although the vestiges of luxury and tyranny are evident enough, we may search in vain for those of the philosophical simplicity of the Taxeles. It will be hardly possible to recognise the Gymnosophists of Alexander in the mendicants of a later age. To the Greeks the natives appeared good soldiers, good farmers, sober, peaceful, simple, honest and veracious. Only a portion of this character remained to the period we are now approaching. The civilization of the Hindoos had long reached the highest point permitted by their politico-religious system, and already all was decrepitude and decay.

CHAPTER II.

FROM THE FIRST INROADS OF THE MAHOMEDANS TO THE FALL OF GHIZNI.

Many centuries elapsed, and India, although the source whence the western world derived its dearest luxuries, remained still a sealed book to the curiosity of Europe. Debarred by the nature of its institutions from that progression of civilization which had elsewhere changed the character and condition of nations, it seemed also to be protected by its natural barriers from those tides of conquest which in other countries had dissolved into one indistinguishable mass so many of the families of mankind. When, however, the first ten centuries, of the Christian era had nearly passed away, the crisis of its fate arrived; and we may be permitted to pause here for an instant to bestow a glance upon the nature of the power which operated such mighty changes both in the east and the west.

The boundaries of the country which the ancients

called Scythia were not a geographical limit imposed by science, but merely the line at which their own knowledge terminated. Scythia extended in reality from the embouchure of the Danube to the Sea of Japan, a distance of five thousand miles; and laterally from the northern frontiers of China to the deserts of Siberia, and from the base of the Himalaya to the further steppes of Mount Imaus. This vast region was occupied by various denominations of Tartars, for the most part known as Huns, who were distinguished from other barbarians by living in tents, and roaming from pasture to pasture. Their only wealth consisted in the moveable property of flocks and herds, and their only power in their courage and their swords. In their foreign wars they were always the invaders, for it was unlikely that they should themselves be hunted, for nothing more valuable than cattle, in the pathless deserts of Central Asia. Robbers from choice and vagabonds from necessity, the wild life they led rendered them daring, hardy, and relentless to a degree which civilized men can scarcely comprehend.

In the third century before our era a wall fifteen hundred miles in length was built, and in vain, to protect the Chinese empire from the incursions of the Tanjous, then the dominant power of this Scythian race. A tribute of money, and silk, and beautiful virgins, was found to be more effective by some of the emperors; till at length Vouti, the fifth of the Han dynasty, after a series of successful wars, succeeded in breaking up the dominion of the Huns, which may be said to have been utterly destroyed before the end of the first century of the Christian Era. Some of the vanquished tribes retired towards the south, and were permitted to guard the empire they had formerly insulted; some mingled

with their enemies, the Sienpi, now the dominant tribe of Tartars; some, marching westward, overthrew, (as we have already noticed) the Bactrian kingdom of the successors of Alexander; and some, whose destiny it was to revolutionize Europe, pushed forward to the banks of the Volga.

The fortunes of barbarians, however, are always hidden in mystery till they receive reflected light from the contact of civilized nations; and for this reason we know little of the history of the Huns till the fourth century, when we find them, in conjunction with the Alani, a great Scythian people of the north whom they had subdued, sweeping like a tempest upon the empire of the Goths between the Caspian and the Euxine. Their appearance spread everywhere terror and dismay. Alike hideous in aspect and brutal in manners, these wandering shepherds seemed to have little in common with our nature, and were supposed by their victims to have sprung from the horrible loves of human sorceresses with the demons of the Scythian desert. The resistance of the Goths against such enemies was feeble, and they at length fled to the Danube and implored permission of Valens to take refuge within the charmed circle of the Roman empire of the East. The fated emperor complied, but with a generosity strangely mingled with insult and outrage; the Goths turned their arms against their quasi protectors; and soon the mighty Attila followed with his countless Huns to precipitate the downfall of the colossus of the world.

The next rulers of the shepherd nations of Scythia were the Turks of Mount Imaus, who entered into relations both of peace and war with the Chinese, Persians and Romans; and who conquered the Huns of Bactria, by that time no longer a horde of wandering Tartars but a commercial and a warlike people who ruled in Eastern

Persia and to the banks of the Indus. This early Turkish empire, however, lasted only two hundred years; but even after its dissolution, the fragments, each a great and independent state, played an important part in the history of the Scythian desert, while many of the thrones of Asia continued to be filled by sovereigns of Turkish extraction.

We may here observe that the word "Tartar" is used with little discrimination by European writers to designate generally the inhabitants of the vast Scythian region. In reality there are in that region at least three distinct languages, and consequently as many nations, viz., the Turks, Moguls, and Manchous, besides various branches exhibiting greater or less evidence of consanguinity with the parent stock. These nations, however, can hardly be said to have a country. From the first movement which resulted in the devastation of the distant west down to a late period, they appear to have been constantly changing their position according to the fortunes of war. At present the Turks, whether under the name of Uzbeks, Turcomans, or Ottomans, are in the west, the Manchous in the east, and the Moguls in the centre.

In the seventh century, when on one hand the Roman colossus was already in ruins, and on the other the great empire of Persia tottered to its fall through internal decay, a new and extraordinary power arose in that peninsular corner of Asia which divides it from the African continent. Arabia, with the partial exception of the line of country bordering on the Indian sea, is nothing more than a great desert dotted here and there with oases of comparative fertility; and from these solitudes, the natural cradle of a wild independence, there came forth a prophet-king who was destined to exercise a mighty influence not merely on the hordes of the Scythian desert, but on the civilised world. The Christianity of

the holy Scriptures was by this time a forgotten dream. The mother of Jesus, a poor, weak, helpless woman, whom in dying he had bequeathed to the love and protection of one of his disciples, had nearly driven her eternal Son out of the temple. The images of saints and virgins had taken the place of those of the gods and goddesses of profane antiquity, and many of the splendid absurdities which had drawn down upon Paganism the thunders of Paul were forcibly dove-tailed into the pure and simple gospel of the fishermen of Galilee. The Catholic Church was no longer Catholic; it was divided into sects and schisms; and instead of love and charity, all Christendom was full of hatred and persecution. At this moment, there came a voice crying from the wilderness of Arabia, THERE IS BUT ONE GOD. This, and this alone, was the original message of Mahomed; although when persecution had compelled him to draw the sword, and the zeal of proselytism became powerful even to phrenzy, many fables were appended. His religion was the religion of simplicity and nature as contradistinguished from that of myths and symbols; and although it had little effect upon refined or sophisticated minds, or upon those of the vulgar which were filled even with a spurious Christianity, it found ready converts among the Asiatic nations. Mahomedanism was soon the faith of all Arabia, and the standard of the Prophet went forth from its native deserts conquering and to conquer.

By the middle of the seventh century all Persia was subdued by the Arabs, who pushed their frontier to the Oxus, the Indus, and the sea; their eastern dominion comprehending those branches of the Hindoo Koosh called the mountains of Ghor, the Solimaun mountains of the Affghans, and the Mecran mountains of the Beloochees. Their religion, however, was not confined by the

boundaries of empire, but spread gradually throughout the Tartar nations, and penetrated into China, the Malay country, and the Eastern Archipelago, where their arms were never heard of. In the beginning of the eighth century, the Arabs subdued a portion of the Hindoo territory along the line of the Indus, and contemplated, it is said, an expedition to Canouj; but in thirty-six years, by some revolution of which the particulars remain unknown, they were driven out of India by the Rajpoots.

After the death of the Caliph Haroun Alraschid, the Arabian empire began to fall in pieces, and most of the governments of provinces became hereditary. Among these viceroys the most distinguished was Ismael Samani, who thus founded the Samanian dynasty of the kings of Persia; which race of princes continued one hundred and twenty-five years, till their power in turn was set aside by one of their own provincial governors. This was Alptegin, a Turkish slave, who ruled for the empire in Khorasan, a province which comprehended the whole of the Bactria of the ancients; and who in general had a substitute in Ghizni, the capital of Zabulistan, in order to keep possession of the mountainous region extending to the Indus. It appears, however, that at this time the wilder portions of the Affghan territory were only nominally subject to the Persian government; the chiefs living in the same kind of rude independence which is observable to-day. Alptegin took up his residence at Ghizni, and forced his former master to ratify by treaty the right of his family to the possessions they had seized; and after his death, and that of his son, who survived his father only two years, the army raised to the throne of Ghizni their general, Sebektegin, also a Turkish slave, who was originally a private horseman in the service of him whom he succeeded in the kingdom. This prince carried his arms

across the Indus into Lahore; but his son, Mahmood of Ghizni, was the first—though not the last—of the Tartar race who became memorable in the wars of India.

In order to comprehend more easily the Indian operations of Mahmood, which paved the way for the Affghan conquest two centuries afterwards, and two centuries later still for the dynasty of the shepherd-kings of Scythia, the shadow of which mocks the throne of Delhi to this day, it will be necessary to inquire into the political state of Hindostan at the period at which we have now arrived.

The country appears to have been then divided, and perhaps was so for centuries before, among a host of subordinate chiefs, each owning homage to one of four considerable states. These four were, Delhi, under the Chohans; Canouj, under the Rahtores; Mewar under the Ghilotes; and Anhulwarra under the Chauras and Salankhis. Delhi included the territory westward from the Aravulli to the Indus, and northward to the Himalaya; Canouj extended eastward to Benares, and comprehended a portion of Bundelkund; and Mewar and Anhulwarra consisted probably of the present Mewar and Malwa, and thence to the Lower Indus and the sea. In this scheme, for which we are indebted to Colonel Tod, the whole of Peninsular India, and a great part of Bengal, it will be observed, are not mentioned. Canouj was the principal city of India, and is said to have been thirty miles in circumference, and of extraordinary grandeur; but its principal interest with the scholar consists in its claim to be considered the Palibothra of the ancients. The geographer D'Anville pronounces against this claim, and in favour of Allahabad, and Robertson follows the authority. Major Rennel, however, adduces a variety of evidence, showing the probability of its having been the

place (mentioned as Palibothra) where the ambassadors of Seleucus were received; and he might have added—as no one doubts the contemporaneous existence of Canouj—that even so inaccurate an observer as Eratosthenes could hardly have passed without mention this vast city, which he must have approached within a trifling distance on his route to Allahabad. Such considerations are of especial weight in a question where science is at fault. The distances of Ptolemy relied upon in this instance by Major Rennel, are usually so inaccurate as to deserve no credit at all; while, on the other side, the changes which take place in Indian rivers are so great, that but little importance can be attached to the fact that the Calini presents no longer to-day the appearance of that third-rate stream, near the confluence of which with the Ganges Palibothra was said two thousand years ago to be situated. However this may be, Canouj was now, no doubt, the capital of one of the greatest of the Indian kingdoms, and its monarch is reported to have defeated the king of Anhulwarra, and extended his dominions beyond the Nerbudda. Megasthenes relates that he had an audience of Sandracotta, in the midst of an encampment of four hundred thousand troops; and the *Sooraj Prakas*, a bardic history, quoted by Colonel Tod, computes the army of Canouj at eighty thousand men in armour, thirty thousand horse covered with quilted mail, three hundred thousand infantry, and two hundred thousand bowmen and battle-axes, besides "a cloud of elephants, bearing warriors." This will admit of enormous reductions, and still leave Canouj a great military state. It was a feudal state, however, embroiled in perpetual wars with its neighbours, and carefully hedged round by the laws of caste from that principle of democracy which in Europe converted clans of robbers into great nations. The four

kings of India worried each other with incessant strife; while the great mass of the population looked calmly on, sowing and reaping as usual, and neither caring nor perhaps knowing under which government they lived. Thus the wheel of fortune went round, and Hindostan became more and more prepared every day to receive the yoke of a stranger. Who could foresee that all this splendour of feudality should one day fade at the approach of the wandering shepherds of Scythia? Who could dream that Tartar and Hindoo alike should eventually quail before the genius of some western islanders, whose sires were naked and painted savages, shivering in their ancestral woods at a time when the refined Greeks were astonished to behold beyond the Indus a people more refined than themselves?

Mahmood's first expedition into India took place in the year 1000. He was met in the neighbourhood of Peshawur by the monarch of Lahore, whom he defeated and took prisoner, but afterwards released. He then penetrated to Butinda beyond the Sutledge, said to have been one of the royal residences of Lahore, with the spoils of which he returned to Ghizni. The conquered king, upon these reverses, transferred his crown to his son, and died upon a funeral pile which he kindled with his own hands.

In the second expedition, the Rajah of Bhattia, on the southern side of Moultan, was defeated, though with great difficulty, and after the decisive conflict fell upon his own sword. Another expedition, from which he was called to repel an invasion of the Tartars, sufficed to re-conquer Moultan, which had revolted; but the fourth was of a more important nature, as he had to meet a confederacy of native princes, some of them the rulers of the principal kingdoms of India. Mahmood was disconcerted by the appearance of the greatest army he had

yet seen, and which did not wait for his entering its country, but marched to the confines of Peshawur to give him battle. The Ghiznivide halted, and entrenched himself in his camp for forty days, exposed to continual assaults and the loss of thousands of his troops. The enthusiasm of the Hindoos increased as this inaction of their enemy continued. It was not a war of prince against prince, but of faith against faith; and even the women at a distance contributed their golden ornaments towards the defence of the gods of their country. An accidental circumstance, however, rendered all unavailing. The elephant of the prince of Lahore, who was the Indian commander-in-chief, was seen to wheel suddenly and fly from the field; and the Hindoos, supposing themselves to be deserted by their general, were seized with a panic, and after a faint effort to recover dispersed in all directions, and were slaughtered to the number of twenty thousand in their flight.

In Colonel Dow's Ferishta the cause of the elephant's terror is said to have been "the report of a gun;" and in General Briggs's translation, the excellencies of which have rendered the former work nearly obsolete, it is made "cannon and musketry," which, however, he suggests, a very slight change in the diacritical points in the Persian, would turn into "naphtha balls and arrows." Mr. Elphinstone, in his excellent History, calls it simply "flights of arrows," but this merely evades without explaining the supposed anachronism. There is nothing improbable in the supposition that a kind of Greek fire may have been used by the Persians. That fire-arms of some kind were found in India by Alexander, may be inferred from a passage in Quintus Curtius; and their use in battle is prohibited in the most ancient laws of the Hindoos, being therein classed with deceitful machines and poisoned

weapons. The word in Sanscrit, Mr. Halhed tells us, is *agnee shastu*, a weapon of fire, which is described as an arrow tipped with fire, and discharged upon the enemy from a bamboo. Cannon, in the same idiom, are the *shet-agnee*, the weapon that kills a hundred men at once.

Mahmood left the Indians no time to rally, but followed them promptly into the Punjab, where he directed his arms against a temple in the Kohistan, or hilly country. This place was in the territory of Nagarcot, and near the town of Kangra, and was supposed by the Hindoos to have been the immediate workmanship of the divinity. Abul Fazel relates, as an instance of its sanctity, that the pilgrims who frequented it in his time were in the habit of cutting out their tongues, which grew again in two or three days. In the time of Mahmood the offerings seem to have been of more value, for the booty carried off by the illustrious robber in gold, silver, pearls, corals, diamonds, and rubies, was so prodigious, that on his return to Ghizni he held a magnificent festival for the purpose of displaying to his subjects the riches of India.

A short time was now spent in reducing the Ghorian country, (and thus establishing a feud which was destined to have prodigious consequences both for the slave-kings of Ghizni and for India), and in another expedition to Moultan, whence Mahmood, whose grand object throughout seems to have been plunder, directed his march against Tanesar, near the Jumna, where there was another rich and holy temple of the Hindoos; and notwithstanding the remonstrances of the Delhi prince, with whom he was allied by treaty, he sacked both city and temple before any means could be taken to oppose him. The interference, however, of the Rajah of Delhi, and his despatch of messengers to acquaint the other chiefs

with the sacrilegious purpose of Mahmood, drew upon him the indignation of the conqueror. Marching from Tanesar he captured the city, and but for prudential considerations connected with the uncertainty of the submission of Moultan, would have annexed the kingdom to his dominions. He returned, therefore, to Ghizni, loaded with new riches, and encumbered with forty thousand captives.

The conquest of Transoxiana next occupied the Sultan; but as soon as this was completed, he returned to the cherished business of his life, and at the head of a hundred thousand horse, and twenty thousand foot, set out on a new and more ambitious expedition into India. He marched upon Canouj, a journey of three months, and presenting himself suddenly before this celebrated capital, the Rajah, in utter consternation, came out and delivered himself and family into his hands. Mahmood spared the city, and then proceeded to Mattra, or Mathura, a town on the west bank of the Jumna, which is mentioned by the Greek geographers, and celebrated in mythology as the scene of the birth and early adventures of Krishna, one of the most popular of the Hindoo deities, and the hero of the poem called the "Maha Bharat." Here the idols were broken and the temples plundered; the images yielding an incredible quantity of gold and silver, and their eyes precious stones of incalculable value. Munj met with a similar fate; and the Sultan then returned to Ghizni loaded as usual with spoil.

Two other inroads into the interior of India produced no result, but the important one of the permanent occupation of the Punjab, to which circumstances gave rise; and then the mighty Iconoclast set out on his last expedition for the overthrow of idols, and the plunder of the Pagan temples. Somnath was this time his destination. It was situated near the southern extremity of Guzerat, and was

the richest and best frequented place of worship in the country. His army reached Moultan in October, 1024, and crossed the desert, three hundred and fifty miles in breadth, to Ajmeer, which they plundered; and thence, skirting southward the Aravulli mountains, they came to Anhulwarra, the capital of Guzerat, which the Rajah abandoned with precipitation. They at length reached Somnath, a lofty fortress seated on a narrow peninsula, washed on three sides by the sea. The defenders, trusting to their own strength, and that of their gods, were undismayed at the approach of the enemy, and the assault was repeated without effect for three days. On the third day the neighbouring princes, coming to the relief of the temple, gave Mahmood battle without the walls, and were defeated with great slaughter; on seeing which, the garrison suddenly gave up hopes of defence, and took to their boats, to the number of four thousand men, leaving the victorious Sultan to enter the temple unopposed.

Somnath, in the time of eclipses, we are told, numbered forty or fifty thousand worshippers at one moment; it was endowed with the revenue of two thousand villages; and every morning and evening the idol was bathed in water brought from the Ganges, upwards of a thousand miles distant. There were two thousand Brahmins who officiated as priests; five hundred dancing-girls, remarkable either for their beauty or birth, the Rajahs considering it an honour to have their daughters admitted; three hundred musicians, and three hundred barbers to shave the devotees before they were allowed to enter the presence of the idol. The lofty roof was supported by fifty-six columns, richly carved and ornamented with precious stones; and in the midst, upheld by a golden chain, hung a lamp capable of illuminating the whole

building, from which the external light was excluded. The idol, according to Professor Wilson, was merely a cylinder of stone, the symbol of the reproductive power of nature, but in Ferishta's account, it was a hollow image five yards high, two of which were buried in the ground, and the interior filled with jewels, which burst forth at the blows of the Iconoclast. Mahmood, it is said, was tempted by the offer of a mighty ransom to spare the idol; but disdaining to be a seller of images, he struck the blow which produced a torrent of riches greatly exceeding in value all his former captures.

After this, he spent some time in Anhulwarra, moved thereto by the report that there were diamond mines in Guzerat, or as others say, to concoct plans for possessing himself, by means of a fleet, of the gold and ruby mines of Ceylon and Pegu. But it was at length necessary to attend to his own safety, for the dispossessed princes were gathering like vultures round his wearied and diminished army; and instead of proceeding by the banks of the Indus (which Mr. Elphinstone considers may have been rendered impossible by the Runn being in that age covered by the sea) he took the route of the desert to the Punjab. In addition to fatigue and thirst, to the burning sun and the scorching sand, they were led out of their way by the guides, who, on being tortured, confessed that they were priests of Somnath! Some dropped down dead upon the desert, some became raving mad,—all were in despair, till at length they fell in with a pool of water, and were able to pursue their dreadful journey to Moultan.

During the decline of the Caliphate, various movements had taken place among the eastern Turks, which ought to have caused some alarm; but those Turkish slaves who aspired to the Persian throne, or set its power at

defiance, rather encouraged than otherwise the immigrations of their wild countrymen, who recruited their armies, and from whom they hoped to derive assistance when necessary. This short-sighted policy was pursued to so dangerous an extent by Mahmood, that when at length it was necessary to send an expedition against the Seljuk tribe, his general was met by them in the field and defeated in a bloody action. This brought the Sultan himself to the spot, and he succeeded in clearing the country, and sending away the more obnoxious tribes beyond the Oxus; but the ferment had only changed its scene, not its character; and in the reign of his son we shall arrive at the still bloodier day of Zendecan, which seated on the throne of Persia the dynasty of the shepherd kings, whose descendants fill that of Constantinople at this day.

Mahmood's last transactions were the invasion of Persian Irak, the territory extending westward from the frontiers of Khorasan, the seizure of its prince and his treasure, and the slaughter, in cold blood, of some thousands of the inhabitants who had opposed him. He then returned to Ghizni, where he was seized with a mortal illness. Feeling the approach of death, he commanded those treasures which it had been the business of his life to amass, to be brought before him, and took leave of them with tears and lamentations. The next day his army, his elephants, camels, horses, and chariots, all were paraded before him, and the dying monarch wept again as he fixed a long last look upon the trappings of his power, and the instruments of his ambition. On the 29th of April, 1030, he expired.

The character of Mahmood of Ghizni, has probably been over-rated by historians. To the native courage of the Turkish soldier he united the skill and forethought of

the general, but this is his highest praise. All the elements of power were within his grasp,—the whole eastern world seemed to offer itself to his sceptre; but his low ambition was satisfied with the plunder of India. He did not fight for conquest, but for gold, and with the exception of some patronage which he bestowed upon literature and the arts, his treasure was spent upon no objects of public utility. Even this patronage derives a great part of its lustre from its rarity in that age; and the sums which he awarded to learned men, if compared with his enormous wealth, appear mean and insignificant. A great epic poem was produced by Ferdousi, under his auspices; but on its completion after thirty years' labour, the taste, and even the justice of Mahmood was overruled by his avarice, and the reward he offered was so inadequate, that the illustrious Persian, rejecting the pittance, retired from the court, and gave vent to his scorn and indignation in a burning satire. It must be said, however, that the Sultan afterwards forgave the satire, and sent its author a sum as ample as his original expectations; although the royal bounty unhappily arrived just when the bier of the poet was borne out of his house. Panegyrics, notwithstanding, were always sure of their reward, for Mahmood possessed the usual vanity of kings, and sometimes a few verses addressed at the proper moment to his personal feelings, were worth an epic to the author. An instance of this gives a curious picture of the manners of the Ghiznivide court. Mahmood, while drinking one night with his favourite mistress, cut off the long tresses of her hair in the folly of intoxication, and the next day was so maddened by his reflections, that people were terrified to approach him. At length Unsuri ventured to accost him in some consolatory stanzas, the point of which was to the effect that "the elegant form of

the cypress is best disclosed by the pruning of its branches," and Mahmood was so delighted with the wit and the rhyme, that he caused the poet's mouth to be filled three times with jewels, and then sat down with him to drink away the remembrance of his indiscretion. But his genius went no farther than the encouragement of literature and architecture. He did not attempt any reform of the rude institutions of his country, or otherwise seek to identify himself with the progress of the nation. Without views beyond the passing moment, without order in his government, and without system in his conquests, his empire was held together only by his military fame and his treasure, and almost the instant he died it fell in pieces. In fine, surrounded by all the circumstances which make a great king, Mahmood of Ghizni must be considered by the philosophical historian as little better than a great brigand.

The sudden decline of the house of Ghizni was attended by important effects to India. Masoud, the son of Mahmood, neglected the spirit of insurrection among the Seljuks so long, that "the swarm of ants," as he was warned by his omrahs, "became little snakes, and then serpents," which he in vain attempted to crush. After a war of two years, the decisive battle of Zendecan, in 1039, sent him a fugitive across the Indus, where he was robbed by his own troops, and assassinated by his own relations. These eventually rendered the Punjab the most important province in the kingdom, and after numerous and bloody conflicts, both with Hindoos and Turks, the Ghiznivide dynasty began in the year 1100 to make Lahore the seat of government, thus introducing into India the Persian language, manners, and institutions. In 1152, these princes were driven permanently across the Indus by the

sultan of the Ghorian Affghans, who utterly destroyed Ghizni, at that period the greatest city in Asia.

The inhabitants of the mountains of Ghor were Affghans, who had been in continual feud with the Ghiznivide princes, almost from the commencement of this dynasty. They were not long satisfied with their triumph over these mortal enemies, but in 1176, under Shahab-u-din, better known in history as Mahomed Ghori, pursued them into India. The last of the Ghiznivides soon sunk before the genius of the Ghori Sulan, but the ambition of this prince was not satisfied with the reduction of Lahore, and the valley of the Indus. In 1193, with an army inured to the Tartar wars, he marched against Pirthi Rajah of Delhi, whom he encountered in that fatal plain between Thanesir and Kurnal, where India has been so often lost and won. This time the Mahomedans were defeated, and returned across the Indus in disgrace; but in two years, having mustered another army, composed of a mingled force of Affghans, Persians, and Tartars, Mahomed made his appearance again on the same field of battle, and partly by stratagem, and partly by valour, overthrew the mightiest army that had yet been collected in India. Pirthi Rajah himself was taken prisoner, and slain in cold blood, and the conqueror, proceeding to Ajmeer, signalized his vengeance further by slaughtering some thousands of the inhabitants. This city, however, on promise of tribute, he left in the hands of a son of the murdered prince; and from similar motives of interest, he spared Delhi, and then returned homewards, leaving his favourite slave Kuttab to carry out his Indian conquests.

At this period the Indian states present a very interesting appearance, from the similarity of their position to that of the great European nations in the middle ages. The feudal regime seems to have existed among them in

all its purity, although probably with few of those repulsive features which deformed it in the western world. The inhabitants of the northern parts of India were soldiers by birth—they belonged to the military caste—and owing possibly to this circumstance, their institutions were modified by that kind of wild honour which prevails in societies where courage is reckoned the noblest of the virtues. The king, the nobles, and the people, all had their feudal rights and privileges, dating backward to a high antiquity; and hence arose the pride of birth and the spirit of clanship. Women in such a form of civilization are not slaves but mistresses; and accordingly among the Rajpoots they attained to as high a rank in society as is consistent with the habits of the East. Nor was the charm of song wanting to render the picture complete, for the high families retained professional bards, versed in genealogical lore, and capable of celebrating the combats of valour and of love.

Historians are anxious to account for the comparative facility with which a congeries of feudal states like this was broken up, and some point to the adoption of Pirthi Rajah (who originally reigned only in Ajmeer) by the Tomara lord of Delhi, as a cause of jealousy on the part of the Rhatore family of Canouj. The truth is, however, that dissensions and quarrels are natural and necessary in such a political system, and as far back as we have any glimpse of historical light we know that these existed in India. The explanation given by the bardic chronicles, so industriously and so carefully examined by Colonel Tod, is highly characteristic of the Rajpoots. The Rhatore monarch of Canouj, they affirm, was so much inflated by the military glory he had acquired, that he determined to have divine honours paid to him by the ancient rite of Soenair. In this rite every office, down

to that of the meanest servant of the banquetting hall, was performed by royal personages; and for obvious reasons the assumption of such gigantic superiority had in all ages been attended with disaster. On the present occasion the august ceremony was to be rendered more interesting by the nuptials of the Rajah's only daughter with which it was to conclude, and who was to select her husband, according to the customs of the time, from the assembled chivalry of India. Invitations or commands were sent to all the princes of the country, and were accepted by all but Pirthi Rajah the Chohan king of Delhi and Ajmeer, and the Rajah of Mewar. The refusal of these chiefs was resented by the insane pride of the king of Canouj, who had their effigies cast in gold and assigned the meanest parts in the festival, that of Pirthi Rajah being *poleah*, or porter of the hall. This Chohan hero, who is the Orlando of Indian story, was enamoured of the fair prize of the day, and he determined to gratify both his love and his revenge at the same moment. In the midst of the solemnities of the Soenair, he swept into the midst of the throng, at the head of the élite of the warriors of Delhi, and carried off the royal maid in open day. A pursuit took place, and a running fight was kept up for four days, but Pirthi Rajah retained the prize of his valour. The feud thus commenced, however, was fatal not merely to one but to all of the Indian states; for it dissolved in torrents of blood the adhesion, such as it was, which subsisted between them, till weakened and divided, each in turn fell a prey to the Ghori Sultan.

This narrative, however highly coloured the circumstances may have been by the bard, is in the true meaning of the word historical; for it throws a strong light upon the manners, feelings, and spirit of the age and

people. These remain in many respects the same to this day.

Mahomed Ghori returned to India in the following year (1194) and defeated Jeia Chandra (more frequently written Jeychand) the Rajah of Canouj; the greater part of whose clan of Rhatores retreated into the western desert, and eventually founded the principality of Marwar. Canouj, Benares, Gwalior, all fell successively into the hands of the Mussulmans, and they were soon in possession of the whole of Behar and Bengal. In 1202, after various alternations of success and defeat on both sides of the Indus, Mahomed Ghori was surprised in his camp near that river, and slain. Like Mahmood of Ghizni he was a mere soldier, and after his death the Ghori empire, like that of Mahmood, crumbled at once into pieces. The whole of the portion on the west of the Indus was subdued by the kings of Kaurizm; and India, under the rule of Kuttab, the deceased Sultan's slave, became an independent kingdom.

CHAPTER III.

FROM THE SLAVE-KINGS TO THE CONQUEST OF BABER.

THE dynasty of the Slaves of the Sultan of Ghor continued till the year 1288, and was distinguished by little more than the commencement of the irruptions of the Mogul Tartars. During the reign of Altamsh, the slave of the slave Kuttab, Gengis Khan, the Scythian monster, so celebrated in history, desolated almost all Asia, and carried his arms and his atrocities to the banks of the Indus. This dynasty presents also the anomaly of a female on the throne of India. "Rezia Begum," says Briggs (after Ferishta), "was endowed with every princely virtue, and those who scrutinize her actions most severely will find in her no fault but that she was a woman." This *fault* signalized itself in Rezia by an attachment which she formed for her master of the horse, who had originally been an Abyssinian slave, and whom she elevated to the post of Commander-in-Chief. Such generosity may be a virtue in a woman, but it is

always fatal in a queen. Her subjects rebelled, and after a bloody struggle, subdued and murdered her. During the reign of Balban (more commonly Balin) the consternation which the new movements among the Tartar nations had occasioned, rendered Delhi, now the capital of India, the retreat of numerous persons distinguished in rank or literature, and at one time fifteen sovereign princes found refuge within its walls. In the succeeding reign, numerous Mogul adventurers who had taken service at Delhi, were found or feared to be dangerous; and these chiefs, accused of corresponding with their countrymen beyond the frontiers, were invited to a banquet, and in the midst of the revel put to death. The custom of promoting slaves to high offices, and thus giving room for usurpations, had ended with the unfortunate Rezia; and at the death of the last of this dynasty the competitors for the throne were the Affghans of Turkish descent and the Turkish mercenaries. The former (of the Khilji tribe of the mountains of Ghor) were successful. At this time the triumphant Moguls ruled in China, the Tartar countries, Persia, Transoxiana, and generally in the territories on the north-west of the Indus which had formerly composed the empire of Ghizni.

The Khilji dynasty continued from 1288 to 1321. Up to this epoch the incursions of the Moguls may rather be considered as forays than invasions; but we now find their lust of Indian conquest amounting to a passion. They first tried their fortune in Lahore and Moultan, the threshhold of the country, but were driven back, although the Mussulmans appear to have been terrified by their very victory. They next marched even to the walls of Delhi, but their enormous army was encountered by a force as great, and eventually driven beyond the Indus.

The hero of this victory was Allah-u-din, (before his

accession Ferose,) whose name is in other respects of great distinction in Indian history. At the first Mussulman invasion, that part of India called the Peninsula was, as we have seen, a terra incognita, but by degrees the new sovereigns began to learn something of their southern neighbours. Allah-u-din was informed that there were some princes in the Deccan, or South, (by which the Hindoo geographers meant the whole territory beyond the Nerbudda river,) who possessed immense riches; and, with a species of insanity which appears to have tinged his whole character, he set out from Karrah at the head of only eight thousand horse to subdue them. The insanity, however, which prompts a man to disregard all ordinary calculations, is sometimes successful, but more especially so in war, the fortune of which is so frequently determined by fortuitous circumstances; and accordingly Allah-u-din found the Rajah of the Maharatta country so absolutely unprepared that his capital was taken without resistance. The result of this incursion was the cession of Elichpoor and its dependencies, and the payment to the conqueror of an immense sum in money and jewels. His march into this great and populous country had been necessarily made through the wild passes of the Vindya range, the natural barrier between Central India and the Deccan; and if he had chosen the same portion of the line for his return his small and heavily laden army would no doubt have been cut off among the mountains. But with the prudence which resembles an instinct in fortunate commanders, he chose a different route, and although meeting at all points the troops of the states through which he passed, his appearance probably excited as much wonder as it provoked hostility, and their faint attempts to oppose him only served, as Ferishta says, to adorn his triumph.

Avaricious, cruel, tyrannical, and profoundly ignorant, there was yet an energy about this man which preserved even his follies from contempt. He formed a project of universal conquest, assuming the title of the Second Alexander; and before he had as yet learned to read (which was not till after his accession) he considered seriously of undertaking the character of a prophet, and promulgating a new religion. On the other hand, by dint of courage and conduct, he baffled the power of the Moguls; he connected the Deccan with Hindostan; and he reduced to obedience the numerous petty princes whose insubordination had frequently rendered the Mussulman sovereignty merely nominal.

His son and successor commenced his reign with all the activity of his father, and speedily reduced the Deccan, which had rebelled, and conquered Malabar; but afterwards, apparently through some taint of hereditary disease, his energies were turned to the lowest and most odious vices, and he was murdered and his family extirpated by one of his own minions, who usurped the crown.

The Toghlak dynasty came next, founded by the son of a Turkish slave and an Indian mother, and is the epoch of the invasion of Tamerlane.

It was the wealth of India, accumulated during more ages than history dares to number, which first exposed it to invasion; and the same wealth, preserved from exhaustion by conquest and oppression, served to uphold the empire of the Mussulmans. But we are already come to the end of this period. Mahomed Toghlak, the second of the dynasty, was a most accomplished man, learned in all the learning of his time and nation, fond of science, sober, brave, and strict in religious observances. On his accession, the joy and loyalty of the citizens of

Delhi were as boundless as the generosity of the prince. Elephants walked both before and behind him in the procession, loaded with gold and silver, which were scattered profusely among the populace. On one favourite a crore of golden rupees, together with a hundred elephants and two thousand horses, were bestowed; and on others a hundred and ninety lakhs in silver, all in one day. Two literary men were pensioned with an annual lakh each—ten thousand pounds a-year. These, however, were trifles compared with an act of compulsory generosity he was next called upon to perform. An immense army of Moguls presented itself before the walls of Delhi, and Mahomed, being unprepared to meet the enemy in the field, bought them off with a sum so vast that it might well be accepted as the price of the empire.

The liberal prince, when left alone by these visitors, was no doubt aghast at the position in which he found himself. He marched into the Deccan, and forced their tribute from the Rajahs from sea to sea; but this, although a welcome, was only a temporary supply. He then determined to follow the example of the Moguls, and set up as a robber of empires. For this purpose he raised an army, of three hundred and seventy thousand horse, as it is said, for the conquest of Persia, but his treasures were eaten up by it before the expedition was ready, and the troops, unable to obtain their pay, dispersed about the country, and took to theft and brigandage on a smaller scale. He next sent a hundred thousand men through the passes of the Himalaya to plunder China; but they were destroyed by the enemy, assisted by the rainy season on their return homewards, and most of the few individuals who escaped were put to death by their desperate master.

His next attempt was an experiment in political

economy, an imitation of the paper money of the Chinese, by the substitution of copper tokens for gold and silver coins. He forgot, however, that one indispensable condition of success in a plan of this kind (a plan in which perhaps resides the grand arcanum) is the absolute solvency of the issuer. National money, if of no intrinsic value in itself, must represent revenue, and by this time Mahomed's affairs were desperate. His tokens were refused by all who had the power to refuse, and the introduction thus operated as a withdrawal to a great extent of the circulating medium. His subjects were ruined, and the king (although paying his debts in the first instance without expense) was, as a necessary consequence, ruined also. Mahomed was goaded into phrenzy. His exactions became so great that the people abandoned their lands, fled to the woods, and maintained themselves by robbery; while the king hunted them with his army, enclosed them in vast circles, and drawing in around them, as in the mighty battues of India, slaughtered them like beasts of the chace. He formed the project of removing the seat of empire from Delhi to Deoghir (which he called Dowletabad), the principal city of the Deccan, as being more central than the former; but the plan being entered upon with a phrenzied violence, which had become the character of his government, it resulted in nothing but ruin, famine, and despair. One by one the provinces revolted against the tyrant, and before his death in 1351, the conquests of Allah-u-din were lost to the empire.

During this dynasty the Indian chiefs are mentioned for the first time as taking a part in the elevation of an emperor to the throne, and it appears that the people were now completely identified with their conquerors.

By this time the Mogul empire of Persia had fallen

in pieces, and indeed the whole of Asia by its chaotic state seemed to be prepared for another of those great movements of the Scythian race which before now had more than once changed the destinies of the world. Timour, or Tamerlane, the agent of the new revolution, was not himself a Mogul, though descended from the great-grandfather of Gengis Khan, but of the rival and detested nation of Turks or Turcomans. He was, however, a Tartar like them (using for the sake of clearness the European designation for the inhabitants generally of Central Asia), and following in the line of the Mogul invaders he himself received the name, and the empire founded by his descendants is called the Mogul empire to this day.

Tamerlane had conquered, or ravaged, the greater part of Asia from the western limits of Persia to the Chinese frontiers before giving himself up to an adventure which so many of his countrymen had attempted in vain. India, however, was now, as we have seen, in a very different position, and the march of the Tartar prince (in 1398) resembled more the progress of a rightful sovereign than that of the invader of an empire. Crossing the Indus at Attock, as Major Rennell supposes, he proceeded to Moultan, then held by his grandson, by whom he was joined; and from this place to Delhi he may be said to have waded through Hindoo blood, which he shed without cause and without resistance at every step. The towns he reached at length afforded only fuel for his savage bonfires, for the inhabitants had deserted them; but on his arrival at the capital he glutted his passion for blood by massacring his adult prisoners to the number, if we may believe Ferishta, of a hundred thousand.

The Hindoos hardly struck one blow for their country. Delhi was surrendered under promise of Tamerlane's *pro-*

tection; but this being as usual only a signal for open robbery, murder, and violation, the inhabitants at length, maddening in their coward's despair, shut the city gates, set fire to their houses, slaughtered their wives and children, and rushed bare breasted upon the Tartar spears. The whole Mogul army at length obtained admission, and a massacre and conflagration commenced which lasted for five days; Tamerlane in the meantime, now emperor of India by public proclamation, looking tranquilly on, and offering up thanks to Almighty God for his success. When the troops were at length fully glutted both with blood and booty, this disastrous meteor vanished from the horizon of India as suddenly as it had appeared, leaving little more than a memory of the horrors it had brought. Tamerlane recrossed the Indus, to carry his arms into Syria, Egypt, and the lesser Asia, and to overthrow his famous rival, Bajazet; after which, in 1405, while marching to the conquest of China, a little iced water drank during illness terminated his career.

Tamerlane was merely the sultan of Persia and Transoxiana, for his foreign invasions seem to have been instigated by a lust of victory rather than of conquest, since he took no precautions, and indeed rarely evinced any desire, to retain the territories he subdued. Like Mahmood of Ghizni he was a Mussulman fanatic, but unhappily for mankind his fanaticism was not overshadowed by a lust of gold. On the contrary, his passion as a warrior was aided by his duty as a devotee; and thus we find the Mahomedan Tartars guilty of as savage enormities as the Pagan Moguls of Gengis Khan. When Tamerlane withdrew from Delhi, in 1399, his authority ceased, and various petty princes of the Seiad family and the Affghan dynasty of Lodi continued to fill the throne of the province till 1526, by which time Baber, the sixth in descent

from the conqueror, and then King of Cabul, had been called in by their disputes. With Baber commences what is called, however erroneously, the Mogul dynasty, the fortunes of which we shall now sketch with a light and rapid hand, taking more care to exhibit results than to describe events.

CHAPTER IV.

FROM THE ACCESSION OF BABER TO THE DEPOSITION OF SHAH JEHAN.

Baber was only twenty-three years of age when the force of events drove him to the conquest of India; but this brief space had been passed in vicissitudes of fortune that are full of instruction for the student of history, and of interest for the lover of romance. To us, however, it belongs only to say that a series of disappointments and reverses which stripped him of all his acquisitions except Bactria, led him to think seriously of the conquests of his great ancestor beyond the Indus; where, he now persuaded himself, lay the only field accessible to his ambition, and rich enough to reward it. In his own Commentaries he regards his achievement as superior to those of the former ravagers of India, inasmuch as his means were apparently far more inadequate; but however this may be, the national character of the Hindoos was now completely broken, the rapid succession of dynasties had inured the people to change, and the horrors perpe-

trated by the Tartars (in which Baber approached Tamerlane himself) spread everywhere dismay and despair. With a very small force, therefore, he succeeded in making himself master of Delhi; and the other Affghan principalities, after some idle threats of resistance, either voluntarily tendered their submission, or were left at the emperor's mercy by their mutual wars.

The states, however, in the west of Hindostan, which were governed by Hindoo princes, although torn asunder like the others by their feudal dissensions, united on this occasion, and for the last time, to oppose the common enemy. The Rana of Mewar was acknowledged as the chief of the confederacy, and was supported among the others by the Rhatores of Marwar, whom we have seen chased from Canouj by Mahomed Ghori, to found in the Indian Desert a kingdom extending over eighty thousand square miles. These Rajpoot chiefs had before now come into conflict with the imperial government, and one of them had even recovered Cheetore from the warlike Allah-u-din; but, owing either to their valour, or the insulation of their territories, we find till this period comparatively little mention of them in Mahomedan history. It is curious to observe that Baber's army was thrown into something like consternation by the approach of the Hindoos towards Agra, and this would probably have been heightened into panic by the sinister prediction of an astrologer, but for the courage and eloquence of the emperor. As it was, the Rana was defeated and escaped with difficulty. Mewat was then reduced; Rintambor acquired; and Chanderi besieged and taken—its Rajpoot defenders, when all hope was lost, murdering their wives and children and rushing out naked on the swords of the assailants. Behar next fell into the hands of this fortunate prince; who then, after a life of toil, anxiety, and

more than ordinary vicissitude, died victorious in the year 1530, the fiftieth of his age.

Baber, like his ancestor, Tamerlane, wrote his memoirs. The latter, one of the most hideous monsters mentioned in history, describes in sentimental terms, the shock he one day felt on treading accidentally on an *ant;* and the former, whose butcheries were only surpassed by those of Tamerlane, paints his own portrait as that of an amiable, humane, and simple-minded man. Both may have told the truth; for even in every-day life we see the human character adapt itself to contradictions quite as extraordinary. Shedding the blood of enemies was the habit and the duty of Tartars; but nevertheless the social virtues were in all probability as common among those wandering shepherds of Scythia, as among the other tribes of mankind. At any rate, there can be no doubt that, except in the practice of war, Baber was of a kindly and forgiving disposition, capable of friendship, fond of simple pleasures, wedded to those early recollections that keep the heart fresh, attached to poetry, to plants and flowers which are the poetry of the earth, and to women who are the poetry of life; and though addicted to sensual enjoyments, only to those that involve community of pleasure, and though a lover of drinking even to excess, a still greater lover of the sociality and sentiment of wine. This was much in a Tartar conqueror. But Baber was also a man of business; he attended personally to the affairs of his government, and his active mind was continually employed in the construction of tanks and aqueducts, and other improvements of the country.

Humayoon, the eldest son of Baber, succeeded to the throne, but being destitute both of tact and energy, did not keep it long. His first mistake, or misfortune, was to abandon Lahore and Cabul to one of his brothers, Kam-

ran, so as to leave only a newly conquered kingdom for himself. A war with Guzerat came next; during the successful invasion of which country (in 1535), Shere Khan, an Affghan Chief, who had been in the service of Baber, and who claimed to be of the royal house of Ghor, raised the standard of revolt, and obtained possession of Behar, and a great part of Bengal. Humayoon was no match for this chief, who proved himself to be an accomplished tactician, as well as a valiant soldier; and although tardily joined by his brothers, the emperor was beaten (in 1540) and compelled to fly to Lahore. Kamran, however, alarmed for his own safety, ceded the Punjab to the victorious Shere; and Humayoon, after an unsuccessful attempt upon Scinde, took refuge in the deserts of Marwar. The horrors of his passage through the Region of Death were embittered by being shared by a beautiful girl of Khorasan, whom he had married at Lahore, and who was then far advanced in pregnancy. On arriving at Amerkote, she gave birth, on the 14th October, 1542, to a son who was destined to render the name of Akbar the most illustrious in the whole Mogul dynasty.

Humayoon at length fled into Persia, and Shere Shah, and after him his son and brother reigned, successively in India. The first of this intermediate dynasty, besides reducing the Rajpoots to submission, constructed a high road from Bengal to the Indus, a journey of four months, planted with rows of trees for shade, and provided with inns at every stage, where poor travellers were fed gratuitously, and wells at every interval of a mile and a-half. Under the last, India was torn asunder by rebellions, in the midst of which, Humayoon returned, after possessing himself of Cabul and the Punjab, and resuming the empire, died at Delhi, in 1556.

Such is the suddenness of change, and such the influ-

ence of personal character in a country like India, that the very next prince, the desert-born child of the fugitive Humayoon, was destined to raise the Mussulman empire to its highest pitch of grandeur. Called to the throne at thirteen years of age, the boy emperor was engaged during the first years of his reign, in disputes, and eventually armed conflict with Behram, a confidential officer of his late father, who had assumed the power of Regent; and it was not till this person's death, in 1560, that Akbar found himself at liberty to begin a career altogether new in the history of India. The Tartars were at this period an insulated body of adventurers in the midst of a great nation. The former ravagers had their points d' appui at home; and even Tamerlane, when laden with booty, and gorged with blood, returned through powerful countries that owned his sway, to meet his rival Bajazet, in the centre of the Ottoman empire. Akbar, on the contrary, had no country but that field of conflict in which he had been left at his father's death, and where he soon found himself almost literally alone; for his officers, despising his years and apparent helplessness, revolted in quick succession. The youth, however, who had been brought up a fugitive, whose familiar sports were taming wild elephants and encountering tigers, and who had been placed while yet a boy on the most unstable throne in the world, there to maintain himself by his own energy or perish, was not likely to be daunted by such dangers. Wherever rebellion appeared he faced it, and by dint of promptness and daring rather than power, triumphed; till, having conquered the Mussulman chiefs, he was able to turn his arms against the Hindoos. Marwar and Mewar soon fell, although the Rana of the latter country recovered his dominions before the death of the Emperor, and founded Oodipoor, the capital of an independent

state to this day. Guzerat was next conquered; the eastern provinces were then brought to submission, and Behar and Bengal, the latter after a protracted struggle, wrenched from their Affghan masters and re-annexed to the Tartar domain. In the north-west, Akbar was not equally successful, for although Cashmere was grasped at, apparently by the mere petulance of power, and set like some beautiful jewel in the imperial crown, an unavailing struggle was commenced with the Affghan tribes whose mountains abut upon the plain of Peshawur, which was continued through several successive reigns. The conquest of Scinde, in 1592, placed almost the whole of Hindostan Proper in his hands, and two years afterwards the recovery of Candahar rendered him master of the hereditary possessions of his family beyond the Indus.

Akbar then turned his attention to the Deccan, where a disputed succession in the state of Ahmednuggur invited his interference. The actual possessor of the capital, however, which she held for her infant nephew, was the Sultana Chand, a woman whose courage and talents were of the highest order. She succeeded in forming a confederacy even among the disputants against the common enemy; and during the siege of the city, when the explosion of a mine had opened an avenue for the stormers, she flew in person to the spot, with a drawn sword in her hand, but a veil covering her face according to the rules of Asiatic modesty, and rallying the garrison, defended the breach till the whole power of the fortress was brought to bear upon the point of attack. The ammunition of the besieged is said to have run short, and with a natural exaggeration, the heroic Sultana is reported in the traditions of the country, when the ordinary shot was expended, to have fired copper, silver, and at last gold coins at the assailants. Her exertions were successful; the

Moguls were driven back, and the next morning they found the breach repaired and the wall as strong as ever. A peace was concluded, which lasted but a short time before the Moguls appeared again in the field, with the King of Candesh for an ally, and those of Golconda and Bijapoor on the side of Ahmednuggur. The struggle was terminated for the present, by the murder of Chand Bibi by her own soldiery, and the consequent capture of the place; but the spirit of the heroine was not extinct in the nation, which was not completely subdued till the reign of Shah Jehan. Candesh and Berar were soon after (in 1600), united under the viceroyalty of one of Akbar's sons.

This son, the third, died of intemperance in the use of wine, which, when too closely watched for open indulgence, he was in the habit of having brought to him in the barrel of a fowling-piece. The second son had died some years before. The eldest, Selim (after his succession Jehangir) under the constant stimulus of opium and wine was almost a maniac. The most fortunate of kings, Akbar was wretched as a father, and more than once had recourse to entreaties and remonstrance with this unnatural son, who was often on the verge of rebellion. His affliction at length affected his health, his appetite failed, and sinking rapidly, he expired on the 13th October, 1605.

By the time of Akbar, the Mussulmans seem to have been prepared to be incorporated with the Hindoo people, and it was probably owing more to the prejudices of the latter than to those of the former that the amalgamation was not more complete. Hitherto their numbers had been constantly reinforced by their countrymen of the desert, who brought with them opinions, manners, and even physical characteristics sufficient to keep up the

national peculiarity of the whole body. This, however, was now at an end. Religious bigotry had converted the Persians, who were of the opposite Mahomedan sect, into enemies, and hostile feelings against the Affghans and the neighbouring Tartar tribes had put a stop to immigration, and thus shut up the Moguls in the country they had subdued. Akbar saw his position with the clearsightedness of a man of genius, and set to the work before him with the tact and energy of a man of the world. Destitute of all external resources, it was necessary to look within the empire. He was not a Persian, nor an Affghan, nor a Tartar, but an Indian sovereign, and his grand object was to reduce to order the chaotic and conflicting elements of power around him. With this view he never humbled those whom he subdued, or punished them for their resistance, but on the contrary opened his arms to them as friends, re-established them more securely than ever in their possessions, and received them into the rank of the great officers of the empire. He made no distinction between Hindoos and Mahomedans, elevating them both alike to employments of trust; and by the abolition of the capitation tax on infidels, and of the law which permitted prisoners taken in war to be made slaves, he placed conquerors and conquered upon a political level, and but for the hideous prejudices of caste on the one hand, and superstition on the other, would have made of them a single, great, and united people.

But Akbar went farther still. Dissatisfied with measures which affected merely the political condition of his subjects, he would act upon their minds, and work with the very stuff of which the human character is composed. His naturally deep feelings of veneration were rather a predisposition to religion than religion itself. At one time he thought of performing a pilgrimage to Mecca,

at another he gave himself up to the theory of Brahminism, at another he worshipped the images of Christ and the Virgin; till at length his restless mind working its way through myths and symbols arrived, as he supposed, at that divine point from which all human systems had diverged. This was pure Deism, approachable by reason without the aid of revelation, and offering to the worship of mankind a God of Mercy to be propitiated by virtue without the necessity for atonement. As for visible objects of adoration, the philosophical Tartar admitted that in some cases they might be advantageous, and he only required that they should at least be the noblest objects of creation, such as "the sun when he shined, and the moon walking in brightness." In practical points he discouraged the superstitions or peculiarities of the Mahomedans, even to the wearing of the beard; and he abrogated such of the laws of the Hindoos as were the most repulsive to reason or humanity, such as the interdiction of the marriage of widows, and the sati when without the consent of the victims. The new religion, it must be added, made little progress beyond the precincts of the court, while the practical reforms, as usual, gave great offence to the dominant party. As for the other changes introduced by this emperor, they will be noticed in another place.

In his personal character, Akbar united in a most singular manner the opposite qualities of the knight-errant and the philosopher. Strong, brave, generous, handsome and elegant, he seemed to be formed alike for love and war; but although he courted danger like a mistress, and in his youth at least was voluptuous if not sensual, he took still more delight in burying himself for days and nights together in religious and literary speculations with the learned Fiezi and Abul Fazel. The

latter of these distinguished persons was murdered by prince Selim, and the emperor was so completely overwhelmed with grief that he could neither eat nor sleep, but remained weeping and lamenting for two days and nights. The last moments of Akbar were spent in reconciling the chiefs with this rebellious son, and in recommending to the protection of the latter the ladies of his family, and the old friends and dependents he was now about to leave for ever. When he died, the hopes of the Hindoos, which had been awakened during his reign, were crushed. The Ghiznivides, the Ghori princes, the Moguls down to his own accession—all had trampled them alike, robbing them of their treasure, insulting their religion, and spilling their blood like water; and after his death succeeding emperors rivalled in their atrocities the most barbarous of their race. It is no wonder that the people gave to Akbar the appellation of *Juggut Grow*, the Guardian of Mankind.

The reign of Jehangir, or Conqueror of the World—for this was the title assumed by Selim—presents few points requiring special notice. With occasional outbreaks of violence, attended by terrific cruelty, he was yet far more rational throughout in his administration than might have been expected; and he possessed the advantages, inestimable to a sovereign of weak and vacillating character, of an accomplished wife and an able minister. The state of order, in fact, in which the empire had been kept by Akbar would probably have remained undisturbed during a considerable part of the new reign — and the rather that Jehangir had a great admiration of his father's talents, and interfered as little as possible with his arrangements — but for the rebellion of his own sons. His consort, Nur Jehan, was the daughter of a Persian emigrant, and into such abject

poverty had her parents fallen, that she was exposed on the road near Candahar when an infant. She was saved from perishing by a merchant, who employed her own mother as a nurse for the foundling; but as she grew up her beauty and accomplishments placed her beyond the need of patronage. The heir of the throne was so fascinated that his parents took the alarm, and bestowed the girl in marriage on a young Persian adventurer called Shere Affghan; but when Prince Selim became the Emperor Jehangir he cut this bond with the sword, and after the murder of the husband offered his hand to the widow. Nur Jehan is said to have at first turned away with horror, but at length yielding to her ambition or her destiny, she became the empress of India in 1611.

According to other authorities, we are presented in the history of this celebrated woman (which throws much interesting light upon the state of manners at the epoch), with the spectacle of a refined and astute spirit accomplishing, by means of the charms and passive energy of the sex, the objects of an ambition which in the case of a man would have deluged India with blood. Before her introduction to Prince Selim, her father had risen by his own talents to so high a station at the court of Akbar, that he was sometimes visited as a guest by the prince; and on an occasion of this kind, when the crowd had retired and only the principal guests remained to drink wine, the ladies of the family, according to custom, were introduced in their veils. Among them Nur Jehan was conspicuous both by her wit and the exquisite contour of her person, and she completed the conquest of the prince by dropping her veil as if by accident, and in the graceful confusion occasioned by the incident allowing her timid eyes to rest for a moment upon his. She was by that time, however, betrothed to Shere Affghan, a man of rank

and honour, whom she soon after married; and it was not till the murder of her husband by her royal lover after his succession to the throne—a catastrophe which in her dreams of ambition she may possibly have anticipated—that circumstances permitted a renewal of the intercourse. Shere Affghan, however, had been a man of high character in the country, and had defended his honour and his life so valiantly that Jehangir was perhaps ashamed of his crime; at any rate, when the young widow was transported to Delhi, her heart in all probability beating with expectation, and her beautiful eyes blazing with triumph, instead of being conducted to the arms of the emperor, she was shut up in one of the meanest apartments of the seraglio, there to support herself and her slaves on an allowance not equal to more than two shillings a-day. Nur Jehan did not lose much time in the indulgence of her grief or indignation, but set to work to pique the curiosity of the capricious tyrant; and with this view she employed her genius in inventing and her industry in manufacturing a thousand articles of taste and elegance, till her name rang through every harem in the city, and her purse was supplied to overflowing with money. Jehangir at length determined to see this woman whom her talents had rendered still more famous than his love, and without announcing his visit he presented himself suddenly in the mean apartment to which he had consigned her.

Everything here was changed. All that wealth and taste could do to render it the abode of luxury and magnificence had been done. Seated round an embroidered sopha there was a circle of slave-girls dressed in rich brocade; while their mistress, who reclined on the cushions, was attired with severe simplicity in a white muslin robe, without jewels or ornaments of any kind. As she arose in slow and artful confusion, as if surprised and

overwhelmed by his presence, touching the ground and then her forehead with her right hand in the usual form of salutation, Jehangir gazed alternately at her and her slaves, the first idea that entered his rude mind being the difference in their attire. He made her sit down with him on the sopha, and questioned her on this point, to which she replied with the fine and intuitive tact of her sex, "These are my servants, and I alleviate the burden of bondage by means of every indulgence in my power; but for me, I am *your* slave, O emperor, and I am satisfied with the raiment of the humble station it is your pleasure to assign me." Jehangir, according to the native writers from whom Colonel Dow has compiled, was more pleased by the wit than irritated by the sarcasm of the reply, and he at once clasped her in his arms. Their nuptials were celebrated the next day; the other favourites of the seraglio were discarded; and to such a pitch of honour did Nur Jehan attain that her name was inscribed conjointly with that of the emperor on the national coin.

It was not possible for the tact even of Nur Jehan to refine the character of Jehangir, but she at least rendered him more human. His sallies of passion became less furious, and his grosser debauchery was withdrawn from daylight, and hidden in the recesses of the private apartments. As an instance of what he was before this epoch, it may be mentioned that the unsuccessful rebellion of his son Khusru was punished by the impalement of several hundred prisoners arranged in rank from the gate of Lahore, and along this terrible line the prince was carried on an elephant "to receive the obeisance of his friends." One of his principal advisers was sewn up in the hide of an ox newly flayed, and thrown into the street; but the hide shrinking speedily in the heat of the sun, and thus terminating the victim's sufferings too soon, another,

enclosed in the skin of an ass, had water poured upon him from time to time, and so lived in unimaginable agony for several days.

Nur Jehan was fortunate in having relations who were generally persons of talent and probity. Her father, who was made prime minister, discharged his functions with credit to himself and advantage to the country; her brothers, too, showed the rare virtue of moderation in the midst of unexpected honours and emoluments; and her more distant connexions who poured in from Persia and Tartary, and were all permitted to share in the rise of the house, exhibited in their conduct a better title to the imperial favour than their consanguinity with her who had been first styled Nur-Mahal, the Light of the Palace, and was now Nur Jehan, the Light of the World.

The principal military events of this reign, besides those connected with the rebellion of the emperor's sons, were an insurrection in Bengal, terminated in 1612 by the death of Osman, a descendant of the Affghan dynasty; a war with Mewar, which resulted in the defeat of the Rana by Prince Khurram (afterwards Shah Jehan) and the restoration of the Hindoo prince to his power and dignity in pursuance of the conciliating policy of Akbar; and a series of more important disturbances in the Deccan.

Of the various states which arose about the end of the fifteenth century out of the wrecks of the great Bahmani kingdom of the Deccan, that of Ahmednuggur maintained the most obstinate contest with the power of Delhi. In 1610 the post of the heroine Chand was filled by Malik Amber, an Abyssinian, who governed for the king; and, irritated by various defeats, Jehangir at length determined to crush this petty enemy by a simultaneous attack from Guzerat, Candesh, and Berar. Malik Amber, however,

was not intimidated. Before the imperial forces could be concentrated, he fell upon the first comers and compelled them to retire, and the other armies, although already on the march, followed their example. But Malik Amber was at length overcome by the jealousies and contentions of his own party, and when Shah Jehan entered the Deccan in 1617, such was the altered state of circumstances that he found no difficulty in ending the war and recovering the territories which had been regained from the Moguls. Another commotion indeed took place some years after, but a general action decided the question in favour of the prince.

This prince had married a niece of the empress, who, thereupon, with the nepotism which seems to have formed a distinguished trait in her character, supported his interest with great zeal; till at length, on the occasion of the expedition we have just mentioned to the Deccan, he received the title of Shah or King, and was declared heir apparent. A dangerous illness of Jehangir soon after showed the state of the question as regarded the succession. The elder brother Purvez on hastening to court was at once ordered back to his government, and the younger Khusru, then in the custody of Shah Jehan, happened to die by assassination just at the moment when it was requisite for the stage to be clear. Mr. Elphinstone doubts the guilt of Shah Jehan; but the deed was common, and, as we shall see, almost necessary at this epoch in India, where the absence of a fixed law of succession had the effect of setting up the crown as a mark for the ambition of all the sons indiscriminately of the reigning monarch.

Although the path of the prince, however, seemed straight, his difficulties were only commencing; for Nur Jehan had now affianced her daughter (by her murdered

husband) to the youngest brother, Shahriar, and withdrawing suddenly her support from the heir apparent, plunged with all the energy of her character into cabals for her son-in-law. Her father by this time was dead, and owing to the weakness of the emperor's mind, and the infirmity of his health, she exercised the supreme power,—a power which, independently of her passion for the aggrandizement of her own family, she could not think of allowing to pass into the determined hands of Shah Jehan. She found no difficulty in exciting the suspicions of the heretofore rebel, and all but parricide, Jehangir against his son; and the latter on his part was not slow in determining to use the army under his command as an instrument of resistance, if not aggression. A civil war commenced in 1623 with great fury, and in the course of two years, Shah Jehan saw himself successively master of Bengal and Behar—a fugitive in the Deccan claiming the assistance of Malik Amber—and a suppliant for mercy, dispirited by sickness, beaten in the field, and deserted by his army.

The imperial general was Mohabat Khan, an Affghan of rank, talent, and high character, whose growing consequence in the state, or else the close association into which the war had brought him with Prince Purvez—or both together—excited the distrust of the empress. As soon, therefore, as the ruin of Shah Jehan left her at leisure, her ingenuity was at work for the destruction of his conqueror. Mohâbat Khan was summoned to court, which at that time sojourned in the Punjab, to answer a charge of misconduct in Bengal; but before his arrival, his son-in-law, who had presumed to marry without consulting the imperial pleasure, was stripped naked in the presence of Jehangir, beaten with thorns, and compelled to give up his wife's dowry. Upon this, the general,

seeing that there was no chance of escape by any ordinary effort, instead of delivering himself up to judgment, marched at the head of a large body of Rajpoots straight upon the camp, at a bridge over the Jailum on the high road to Cabul, and seized the emperor's person, just as he was about to cross the river after his army.

At this crisis Nur Jehan displayed a high and heroical spirit which ought to place her in the first rank of the women of history. She crossed the river in disguise, upbraided her brother and the other chiefs of the imperial army with their negligence and cowardice, and instigated them to attack the rebel camp for the deliverance of the emperor. The next morning accordingly the army, finding that the bridge had been destroyed by the Rajpoots, moved lower down, and attempted to pass the Jailum at a difficult ford, where they were encountered by the enemy the moment they gained the opposite bank. The empress, mounted on an elephant, armed with arrows, and carrying the young child of Shahriar in her lap, was at their head, and effected a landing almost alone, and in the midst of a shower of balls, arrows, and rockets. Her devotion, however, was unavailing. The imperial troops were driven back into the river with much slaughter, and Nur Jehan, against whom the chief efforts of the Rajpoots were directed, after having had the driver of her elephant killed, and the infant on her knee wounded, was enabled to escape only by the desperation of the animal, which, maddening with pain from a gash on the proboscis, plunged into the river, and carried her back to the opposite side.

She now determined to trust to her ingenuity alone, and joining the emperor in his captivity, she eventually succeeded in releasing him from the hands of Mohabat Khan. This had only the effect, however, of throwing

the defeated general into an alliance with Shah Jehan; and at the death of Jehangir soon after, (in 1627), after a brief and fruitless effort in favour of her son-in-law Shahriar, Nur Jehan retired from the world, on a handsome stipend, to devote the remainder of her life, at least in external observances, to the memory of her husband.

A great portion of Jehangir's life appears to have been passed in the diseased action and reaction produced by immoderate quantities of wine and opium. The account furnished by Sir Thomas Roe, the English ambassador at his court from James I., ascribes to him a certain portion both of good feeling and good sense, and it is not impossible that these qualities may have formed the groundwork of his character, though clouded by the alternate excitement and depression of habitual intoxication. He must be judged, however, by his deeds, and not by the impression made by him on a guest, at those imperial revels where he who shed blood so freely was moved to tears of maudlin sentiment by wine. Like his father Akbar, he had no religion; and like him he at one time formed the design of inventing one. Without the strength and consistence, however, of Akbar's character, he was at once irreligious and superstitious. His ear was open to all who claimed it, but he had a natural predilection for the society of the low and ignorant; a predilection that may have had some effect in confirming what has been called the inflexibility of his justice, which made no distinction between the rich and poor. It is a prostitution of the word, however, to give the name of justice to the instantaneous impressions on which Jehangir acted, for with him an accusation, more especially if directed against the great by the mean, was equivalent to a proof. The manual arts flourished

during his reign, but the public administration was fast sinking into the confusion from which it had been rescued by Akbar.

Since the close of the thirteenth century, when the Khilji dynasty invaded the Deccan, an intermittent war, as we have seen, had been kept up between the princes of that country and the rulers of Hindostan. On the accession of Shah Jehan the native monarchies were three in number, Ahmednuggur, Beijapoor, and Golconda; and the Mogul dominion in that quarter was limited to some portions of Candeish and Berar, the frontiers of the Peninsula on the side of Central India. As soon as the new emperor had secured the stability of his throne by murdering or putting out the eyes of all who could be suspected of forming any pretensions to it, he turned his thoughts and his arms to this debatable land of India, in which he had already acquired some military reputation, and after consuming nearly eight years in the vicissitudes of war, succeeded in 1637 in extinguishing the kingdom of Ahmednuggur, having previously imposed a tribute upon those of Beijapoor and Golconda.

After some occurrences of less moment, Shah Jehan was then led by the treason of Ali Merdur Khan, governor of Candahar for the king of Persia, into a series of disastrous operations beyond the Indus. The Moguls took possession of the place, and the emperor conceived the design of recovering Balkh from the Uzbeks. This he actually did, but only for a moment; for the Tartars from beyond the Oxus poured like troops of wolves into the conquered territory, and Prince Aurungzebe, who was sent to oppose them in 1647, retreated with difficulty through the passes of the Hindoo Koosh to Cabul. The next year the Persians recovered Candahar, and after two unsuccessful attempts made by Aurungzebe

to dislodge them, his brother Dara took up the adventure and with similar bad fortune. The Moguls finally retired in despair, after sustaining in these operations enormous losses in men and money.

Two years of tranquillity ensued, and then the Deccan wars were recommenced by a wanton aggression on the part of the Moguls. Aurungzebe was the commander in this service, in which he exhibited all the baser characteristics of Tartar valour. He at length succeeded in humbling the king of Golconda, and was on the point of obtaining possession both of the capital and country of Ahmednuggur, when the sudden illness of his father, Shah Jehan, called him away to an enterprise of more moment both to himself and the empire. The personal acquisitions he had made, besides the usual booty in gold and jewels, were the hand of the princess Rizia of Golconda for his son Mahomed, who married her, it is said, amidst the flames of her father's capital, and the friendship—if there can be friendship between such men —of Meer Jumla, the minister of the same state, who was destined to play a conspicuous part in the coming events.

The emperor had four sons, all of an age to grasp at the crown. Dara was a frank, headlong, overbearing soldier; Shooja a devotee of wine and women; Aurungzebe a Mohamedan Jesuit; and Morad a knight-errant, to whom war was a pastime, and business a romance. Dara was on the spot at the time of the king's illness; Shooja and Morad, as soon as the interesting intelligence reached them, assumed respectively the title of emperor, and collected their forces; and Aurungzebe declared in favour of the youngest and least powerful, Morad, affirming that he was himself sick of the vanities of the world, and only ambitious of spending the remainder of his life

at Mecca. The two eldest met in the field, and Shooja was worsted; and the two youngest, joining their armies under the command of Aurungzebe, overthrew the victor in a pitched battle. Aurungzebe, finding his father still cling to the cause of Dara, deposed and imprisoned him; and dissimulation with his mock-sovereign, Morad, being no longer necessary, he made him drunk at an entertainment, sent him quietly off in chains to a state prison, and mounted the imperial throne in 1658.

Shah Jehan had so long been sunk in the lethargy of age, intemperance and disease, that he passed into retirement with hardly a remark; and yet his reign divides with that of Akbar the suffrages of history. Without the genius of his grandfather he had more talent; or at least his talent lay more in details, and the internal government of the kingdom, therefore, was more perfect. The same character of mind was evidenced in the buildings, such as the Taj Mahal at Agra, and the great Mosque at Delhi, which rose under his command, and in the famous Peacock Throne, which cost upwards of six millions sterling. All his establishments were formed on a scale of similar magnificence; and the cities and towns throughout the whole empire are represented by travellers as emulating the splendour of the royal residences. The taste of the emperor set the example to that of his subjects, and the care with which he managed the revenue enabled both to gratify it to the utmost. When Shah Jehan died, therefore, he left a rich treasury and a prosperous country.

CHAPTER V.

AURUNGZEBE TO THE END OF THE MOGUL DOMINION.

Aurungzebe had reigned five years before he succeeded in destroying all his kinsmen and was relieved by death from Meer Jumla, an instrument then useless for his ambition and too powerful for his tranquillity.

About that time, in the year 1662, a new and extraordinary power in Southern India began to attract attention. The Mahrattas appear to have been nothing more than the Hindoo peasantry, scattered throughout some of the mountainous districts of the Mahomedan kingdoms of Ahmednuggur, Beijapoor and Golconda, and united into a body only by the prejudices of caste, of which their rank was the lowest, that of Sudra. In the confusion incidental to the constant wars in which these states were engaged, some of the head men of their villages set up for themselves, and one of them, Shahji Borla, became powerful enough to play a conspicuous part at the time of the annexation of Ahmednuggur to the Mogul empire. His son Sevaji, setting out from this

vantage ground, strengthened his hands by the silent capture of some hill forts in Beijapoor, and eventually raising the standard of revolt against that government, introduced a spirit of union amidst the scattered masses of his people, and may thus be considered the founder of the Mahratta empire. In 1662 he commenced his predatory expeditions into the Mogul territory, and in ten years he found himself at the head of a regular government with the title of Rajah, and strong enough to encounter and defeat the imperial forces in a field battle.

This was the critical moment in the progress of the Mogul empire. Aurungzebe was called away for two years by the chronic disturbances beyond the Indus; his strength was wasted by the ceaseless wars of the Deccan; and being goaded to madness by the casual insurrection of some Hindoo devotees in the centre of his dominions, he replaced the capitation tax on infidels, and fulminated other decrees against that portion of his subjects of such extravagant intolerance, that they at length looked upon the progress of their co-religionists, the Mahrattas, with more longing than alarm. In 1679, the western portion of Rajahstan was in arms against the empire, and continued in a state of hostility more or less active during the whole reign. Even the emperor's eventual successes in the Deccan in overthrowing the kingdoms of Beijapoor and Golconda, contributed to his ruin; for it removed the check of regular government from that distracted portion of the country, and by breaking up the masses of society, threw into the arms of the Mahrattas the adventurous and the desperate of the population.

Sevaji died, and successors of less talent filled the throne of the robber-king; but this seems to have had no effect upon the progress of the inundation, which now bursting

over the natural barriers of the peninsula, and sweeping away its military defences, overflowed Malwa and a portion of Guzerat. Aurungzebe fought gallantly and finessed craftily by turns; with unwearied industry he attended to the minutest business of the state even when at the head of his army; his sons more especially he kept at a distance from the throne, for they were still more the objects of his suspicions than the other officers of the empire; and thus he struggled with his destiny even to extreme old age, bravely and alone. He expired in his eighty-ninth year, the fiftieth of his reign, on the 21st of February, 1707.

Aurungzebe might have been a great prince of a little state, but his mind was not of wide enough calibre for the position in which he was placed by his fortune or his crimes. He was too much devoted to details to be capable of large views. Brave, industrious, persevering, moderate in passions, cold in sentiments, and profoundly deceitful, he seemed formed for an eastern throne; and yet by his uncompromising bigotry and morbid suspicion, he paved the way for the subversion of the Mogul dominion by a power which under other circumstances would at best have become a rival of Beijapoor or Golconda. The impolicy of the emperor, however, it must be said, was only the proximate cause of this effect; for the acclimatized Tartars were fast sinking into an effeminacy which could hardly have been expected to hold together much longer so vast and heterogeneous an empire.

During the next twelve years after the death of Aurungzebe, no fewer than five princes sat upon the throne, whose reigns, without being distinguished by any great events, exhibited evident indications of the gradual decline of the empire. During that period the Sikhs, originally a sect of Hindoo dissenters, whose peculiarity consisted

in their repudiation of all religious ceremonies, having first been changed into warriors by persecution, began to rise by the spirit of union into a nation; but so weak were they at this time that in 1706 the dying energies of the empire were sufficient almost for their extirpation. It was also the epoch of the Seiad brothers, two provincial governors, distinguished by their talents and honoured on account of their descent from the Prophet, who ruled the dregs of the dynasty till the year 1720. Mahomed Shah succeeded to the throne in 1719. The Mahratta government was by this time completely consolidated, and the great families of the race, since so celebrated, had begun to rise into eminence: such as that of the Peshwa, the official title of a minister of the Rajah; of Holkar, the founder of which was a shepherd; and of Sindia, which sprang from a menial servant. The two last began their career of adventure as officers of the first.

A still more remarkable personage of the time was Asof Jah, whose descendants became the Nizams of the Deccan. This chief had formerly been viceroy of the conquered countries in that part of India; but instead of obtaining the imperial viziership which he had expected, was made merely governor of Malwa; and now instigated by revenge for this neglect of his services, he revolted from the empire, set forth for the conquest of his late viceroyalty, beat the Mogul vizier in the field, and by one of those strange vicissitudes which frequently startle the reader of eastern history, obtained for his trouble the very post which had been the object of his ambition. Here his talents might have at least retarded the fall of the empire; but being a stern and ungracious man of business he became an object of hatred to his feeble and luxurious master; and once more setting out for the Deccan, he seized upon his old viceroyalty, plunged headlong into

the Mahratta intrigues, and eventually became the ally of the Peshwa Baji Rao, the Rajah's able minister. The Mahratta torrent seemed now resistless, and the demands of the Peshwa upon the unhappy emperor, whom he beat both in the field and the cabinet, became so extravagant that even Asof Jah was alarmed. He at length determined to support the government, but only when it was too late. The quondam allies met in the field, Asof Jah commanding all the poor resources of the empire, and the Mahrattas were as usual victorious.

While the empire was thus rent in pieces by internal disturbances, a more tremendous enemy even than the Mahrattas presented himself from without. A revolution had taken place in Persia, which seated a soldier of fortune upon the throne; and the famous Nadir Shah, after capturing Candahar, found it necessary, according to the fashion of conquerors, to seize upon the Mogul territories, Ghizni and Cabul, and when at the latter city to continue his march into Hindostan. In 1739, he arrived at Kurnaul, within seventy miles of Delhi, and defeated the emperor in a general engagement. Asof Jah has been accused of being accessory to this invasion, and in all probability with justice, the accusation, independently of the authority on which it is made, receiving every colour of truth from the character and previous conduct of the man. The two kings then proceeded to Delhi after the battle, where Nadir, in consequence, it is said, of an insurrection of the populace, set fire to the city and massacred the inhabitants to a number which has been variously estimated at from thirty to one hundred and fifty thousand. He then proceeded to the main business of his invasion, robbing first the treasury and afterwards the inhabitants individually, torturing or murdering all who were suspected of concealing their riches,

and at length returned to his own dominions, having obtained a formal cession of the country west of the Indus, and carrying with him in money and plate at least twelve millions sterling, besides jewels of great value, including those of the Peacock Throne.

From this period to the death of the emperor Mahomed Shah in 1748, the interval was filled up with the disturbances which might be expected where so many elements of disorder existed, and where an empty treasury was now added to the other evils that oppressed the sinking dynasty. Two invasions by the successor of Nadir Shah deprived the Mogul dominions of the Punjab, and in a third Ahmed Shah marched to Delhi, and repeated the horrors of the Persian massacre. A little later the Mahrattas followed like gleaners after a harvest, filling the unhappy city with devastation and death, and leaving it at length little better than a heap of rubbish, in the midst of which the remaining inhabitants crouched in hunger and despair.

India now became a closed field between the Mahrattas, who had by this time attained their pride of place, and the Affghans; the latter supported as the less formidable enemy by the Mogul and some of the Rajpoot chiefs—for after the death of Alumgir II. in 1759, the crisis was so fearful as to admit of scarcely any thought of the pageantry of a crown. At length, on the 6th January, 1761, the two parties met at Paniput, within fifty miles of Delhi. The battle was at first in favour of the Mahrattas, who broke the centre of the Affghans; but on Ahmed Shah coming up in person with his own line, the enemy were seized with a sudden and unaccountable panic, and fled like one man. They were pursued for twenty miles, and many of those who escaped the sword were destroyed like wild beasts by the peasantry, while the prisoners who

fell into the victor's hands were put to death in cold blood, making the total loss amount to more than two hundred thousand men. This blow was decisive. The broken remains of the army retired in despair to the Deccan, their despondency communicating itself to the whole Mahratta people. On the other side, the Mahomedan confederacy dissolved as soon as its immediate object was accomplished, and Ahmed Shah withdrew from India for ever, leaving an empty throne amidst the ruins of the empire.

We have now sketched with a rapid but not careless hand the fortunes of India to the fall of the Mahomedan empire; and before giving ourselves to the task of endeavouring to obtain some distinct idea of the state of civilization in the country during the same period, we may be permitted to pause here and look back for a moment at the ground we have already traversed.

The more familiar we are with the progression of society in Europe, the more difficult we find it to comprehend the principle of what is improperly termed permanence in the Eastern nations. This "permanence," unhappily, is opposed merely to progress, not to retrogression. The natural state of the beasts is permanence, that of the human kind movement. Happiness is the search for happiness; hope is enjoyment; the soul of man hovers in vain over the flood—it finds no resting-place till it returns to the ark whence it came. Before the dawn of authentic history, Hindoo civilization had reached its culminating point, and was then chained in by the politico-religious laws of the people. Their arts and sciences however, their liberties, their political institutions, since they could not advance, went backward; and if the collision of India with other forms of civilization had been delayed much longer, it may be a question whether the inhabitants would not have been found in a state of

comparative savagism. Even now there are traces in the woods and deserts of forgotten cities and monuments of races that have passed away.

It has been finely said by Michelet that history is a narrative of the struggle of liberty against fatality; but in India this struggle, in its higher meaning, had ceased, and her annals are merely the records of interminable feuds, which, while influencing the destinies of individuals and families, left the political condition of the people unchanged. In Europe, man is engaged in perpetual strife even with the powers of nature themselves. We wrest knowledge from the genii, we possess ourselves of the dominions of space, we make slaves of the elements; while in India, the progression of mind having ceased, there was no such ambition, and all these things belonged to the gods, and were hedged round by religion from a people sunk in abject belief and submission. For this reason the collision of the two races, Tartar and Hindoo, failed to produce the results observable in Europe from the desperate energy of the Gothic and other barbarous nations, upon the worn-out and apathetic refinement of the Roman empire. In the west the fusion of these two characters gave redoubled impetus to that civilization of which we are now only in the midst; while in India the combination was political, not moral, and the result was a mere tyranny of races, which produced little effect upon manners and hardly any upon opinions.

The Mahomedan dominion, as we have seen, was never placed upon any secure foundation, but depended entirely upon the personal character of the monarch. Among the Hindoos, the chiefs had been to a certain degree anchored with territorial possessions, but this was not the case with their conquerors; while among neither was there an aristocracy either of law or religion or invested

capital, or of any other element of national stability. The emperors' sons were themselves the greatest enemies in the country to the security of the throne. All had the same right, which depended upon the changeful affection of a father, and all had nearly the same prospects, for all were brought up to rule, with armies to command and provinces to govern. There was no such thing, therefore, as unity of interest even in the imperial family; and the death or mere illness of the sovereign was the signal for universal commotion.

India, under the Hindoos, it must be added, was divided into numerous petty states, each in arms against the rest, and all convulsed by the internal dissensions incidental to their feudal regime. The people again were sub-divided into classes, not of freedom and vileinage as in Europe, but of *caste*,—a word which implies a force of repulsion that can hardly be comprehended by men brought up under another form of civilization. A nation in this state could not withstand the invasion of a brave and united army: it fell in pieces almost at a blow.

But the seeds of disease and decay grew with the growth of the Mahomedan dominion. When it had reached the zenith of its glory, it was on the brink of dissolution. The more the boundaries of the empire were extended the more powerful the viceroys became, and thus the very success of the sovereign surrounded the throne with enemies. Without an aristocracy of any kind, as we have remarked, to serve as points d'appui throughout the country for the royal authority, all depended upon the sovereign himself, who bore like another Atlas the imperial world upon his shoulders,—a world which it wanted only the concurrent circumstances described in the narrative to cause to fall asunder and bury him in the ruins.

The Mahrattas were nothing more than a confederacy of military chiefs, uniting or separating according to the dictates of interest or caprice, and although practically possessing the country for a moment they gave no dynasty of kings to India. They seized, however, upon many of the fragments of the empire, creating them into states, some of which retain a kind of independence to this day.

The People under this succession of political change did not advance, and they could not stand still, although circumstances prevented their decline from assuming the form of revolution. The village communities into which the masses were divided from the earliest times, gained strength rather than otherwise, by the very causes which overturned the throne. The inhabitants might be chased away, and their habitations destroyed by the ruffian troops; but when the storm had passed by they always returned to build again among the ruins, and sow and reap, and thank the gods as usual. The invaders were too few to take permanent possession of the villages, and at any rate the supreme power had no temptation to overthrow institutions which seemed to have been framed originally with an express view to the easy and regular collection of the revenue. There was no mutual bond, however, between the government and these communities. The latter knew that it had been their duty from time immemorial to pay the taxes, but neither they nor their ancestors had ever dreamed that it was also the duty of the government to grant its protection in return. Hence came the necessity for self-defence, the union arising from community of interest, the fidelity and blind obedience imposed by the constant sense of danger. Hence too came that perversion of moral feeling which frequently converted the village societies into banditti, and made

robbery and violence be regarded as dishonourable only when unsuccessful.

Thus the unfortunate inhabitants of India preserved their manners and customs as a people when they had utterly forgotten their union as a nation; and thus the permanence ascribed to this form of civilization belongs in reality only to its external phenomena. The religion, the philosophy, the literature of an earlier age were gradually lost in ignorance and superstition; and at the downfal of the Mogul dominion, the intellectual character of the country was at least as different from that of the epoch of pure Brahminism, as the Rome of the seventh century was different from the Rome of the Antonines.

BOOK II.

THE CIVILIZATION OF INDIA UNDER THE HINDOOS AND MAHOMEDANS.

CHAPTER I.

COMMERCIAL INTERCOURSE WITH THE WESTERN WORLD.

That improved condition of the species which we term Civilization appears to be the result of intercourse between different tribes of men; and commerce, or the interchange by barter of the conveniences or luxuries of life, being an important promoter of such intercourse, may be considered as one of the great bases of civilization. The Indian character, however, was but little modified by external traffick, which did not in the case of that country lead to any considerable intermixture of the people with strangers, and which, generally speaking, received only the precious metals in exchange for goods. But the progress of refinement, notwithstanding, went

on, produced by the intercourse of the tribes and races spread over the vast area of the territory itself; and this refinement, if carefully examined, will probably be found more different from that of Europe in kind than in degree.

The Egyptians under Sesostris are said to have been the first traders with India; but this rests upon no good authority, and it is to the last degree improbable that a nation holding the maritime profession both in fear and detestation should, in so early an age, have sent immense fleets down the Arabian Gulf and along the whole coast of the Erythrean Sea. The Sabæans of Southern Arabia are reputed the next, receiving their merchandise by the same route from the mouth of the Gulf, and transferring it to the Egyptians and to the Phenicians of Tyre, Sidon, and other places, by whom it was dispensed to the rest of the western world. Long before this time, however, an intercourse was established with India by land, of which the route is described with some minuteness by Pliny and Strabo, whose information was received from more ancient authorities.

The course of this early traffick was probably through the north-western portal of India, the Punjab; along the Affghan and Ghori valleys to the Oxus near Balkh; down that river a certain distance, and thence westward across the Caspian and Euxine Seas. This journey was no doubt performed chiefly with camels, which are mentioned among the domestic animals so early as the calling of Abram; but it is not unlikely that the treasures of India may have changed hands more than once during the transit, or that a depôt may have existed on the Oxus in that territory perhaps which was *afterwards* the Bactria of the ancients. It is vain to attempt to conjecture what was the state of the countries through which this civiliz-

ing stream of commerce flowed; but we may assume it to have suffered a vast deterioration even at the epoch of Alexander the Great, before which, in consequence of the improvements which had taken place in the art of navigation, the overland journey must have been at least partially abandoned for the easier route by the shores of the Erythrean Sea.

The greater part of this latter traffick remained for a considerable time in the hands of the Phenicians, who, in order to avoid the long land journey from the Arabian Gulf to their principal emporium, established a depot at Rhinocolura, then the nearest port to the Gulf in the Mediterranean; and the goods were there re-shipped and transported to Tyre, "the renowned city which was strong in the sea," and whose merchants, in consequence chiefly of this valuable trade, became "princes and the honorable of the earth."

The wars of Alexander interrupted business for a time; but after his death, and when Tyre had begun to recover from the blow, the city of Alexandria, which that far-seeing prince had founded, became the great emporium of the commercial world.

The Romans in turn made themselves masters of the Indian trade by conquest. Carthage, Greece, Syria, yielded to their arms; Egypt became a province of the empire; and the far east was ransacked with more zeal than ever for merchandize fit to minister to the luxury of the masters of the world. Besides the goods received by the ordinary route there was at this time a trade of some importance carried on with India by the Euphrates. The depot of the traffick was Palmyra—the Tadmor in the wilderness founded by king Solomon—and the Romans were so covetous of the riches of the east that they encouraged its trade to such an extent as to render it in

some measure a rival of Alexandria. In process of time the distinction to which they thus attained proved fatal to the merchant-princes of the desert, who would needs grasp at a portion of the empire as soon as symptoms of its approaching dissolution began to appear. Zenobia was the heroine of the time, the celebrated Queen of the East,—"perhaps the only female," says Gibbon, "whose superior genius broke through the servile indolence imposed on her sex by the climate and manners of Asia." Gibbon knew little of the women of India! The heroical spirit of Zenobia was displayed only in the excitement of conflict and the intoxication of success. When her army was beaten, her city of palms captured, and herself a prisoner in the hands of Aurelian, her courage deserted her, and she exhibited all the weakness unrelieved by any of the generosity of her sex. In order to save her own life she directed the vengeance of the emperor on the heads of her counsellors, and among them betrayed "the sublime Longinus" to the scaffold. The inhabitants of the city—men, women, and children—were afterwards butchered, and the palaces of the merchant-princes of Palmyra converted into the gaunt ruins which still startle the unfrequent traveller of the Arabian desert; while the heroical Zenobia, the famous Queen of the East, sunk gracefully into the station of a Roman matron, the thriving mistress of an elegant villa at Tivoli.

The Indian trade was not at its height with the Roman world till the discovery of the regular course of the monsoons shortened the voyage. Instead of vessels creeping along the coasts of Arabia as heretofore, large fleets now stretched boldly across the ocean from the Red Sea to the Malabar coast or the island of Ceylon. The middle passage occupied about forty days, and the whole trip was performed between the summer solstice and the

months of December and January. Gibbon remarks that the objects of this oriental traffick were "splendid and trifling," and that its profit "was made upon Roman subjects, and a few individuals enriched at the expense of the public." It is curious that this great writer should not have been more struck with the importance of a trade which exalted and overthrew so many states and cities, and which by the luxury it created or fed was unquestionably one of the causes which hastened the downfal of the Roman Empire.

The principal commodities received by this traffick were cotton manufactures, pearls and gems, perfumes and spices, dyeing materials, drugs, ivory, and silk.

The branch of cotton goods is supposed by Robertson to have been unimportant, since their various kinds were not enumerated in the Roman law de Publicanis et Vestigalibus; but, on the other hand, they are frequently mentioned by Arrian in the Periplus, their delicacy and construction are lauded by Strabo, and from Pliny we learn that they bore a very high price in the market.

Pearls were a favourite luxury of the Romans, and those of India are described by both Pliny and Strabo as the finest in the world. The same thing may be said of diamonds, and to a less extent of emeralds.

Perfumes and spices were extensively used in the ancient world for embalming the dead and in religious ceremonies. It is not easy to distinguish at this distance of time between those of India and Arabia; but that the former were reckoned the best, as they were certainly the dearest, may be concluded from the fact related by Lampridius as an instance of extraordinary extravagance, that the emperor Heliogabalus burnt Indian perfumes unmixed in the vapour rooms of the baths. Among the

names of these articles are nardus or spikenard, malabathrum, which appears to have been a variety of the same production, and amomum. The last, however, is supposed by Salmasius to have been a generic term signifying any simple perfume; while with Avianus it is cinnamon, and with other authorities, a substance used in embalming, whence the word mummy.

The dye stuffs were chiefly indigo, dragon's blood, and gum lac. The last, we are inclined to think, may have entered into the composition of the famous Tyrian purple; for it is known that the finest of that dye was red, and only the common kind violet. Alexandria seems to have inherited the secret from Tyre; for in the fabliaux of the twelfth century, in the collection of Le Grand d'Aussi, Alexandrian purple is generally scarlet. In one instance, however, there is mention made of a grey purple, and in other old pieces we find green and even white purple; which is sufficient to prove that the rich and costly dye came at length to transfer its name to the stuffs without distinction of colour.

The drugs of India, according to Strabo, were numerous, although we cannot as yet trace any reference to opium, which may be owing to this substance being obtained nearer at hand. Indeed, it is not unreasonable to conjecture that opium may have formed an ingredient in the drugs with which Medea supplied Jason in the Arganautic expedition to Colchis, more than twelve hundred years before the Christian era. This was a black juice, we are told by Appollonius, collected in a shell from a plant bearing a yellow flower and about a cubit high, and was obtained from the root either by pressure or incision. In the time of Dioscorides, the whole of the poppy was pressed and its inspissated juice made use of in a form weaker than opium; and it is not unlikely that the root may

possess the soothing or anodyne qualities of the rest of the plant.

As silk maintained for a considerable time a price equivalent to the value of its weight in gold, which in our day would give 63*l.* 6*s.* per pound avoirdupois, it would be unreasonable to suppose that it was supplied in any but small quantities. Its delicacy, however, rendered it an article of high fashion, while its extravagant price caused it sometimes to be unravelled and woven anew into fabrics so thin, that the Roman ladies, who perhaps had no under clothing at that period, laid themselves open by wearing them to the censures of the moral or the ill-natured. Seneca observed that a woman so dressed could scarcely swear that she was not naked; and Publius Syrus, Varro, Tibullus, Propertius, Horace, Pliny, and Juvenal, all testified, at different periods extending over a space of a hundred and thirty years, to the crystalline transparency of these valuable gowns. Silk was confined to the dress of the fair sex till the time of Heliogabalus, who set the example to his subjects of what was considered the last degree of effeminacy, by wearing a stuff that had actually been proscribed as unmanly in the reign of Tiberius. Notwithstanding the increasing demand, it long maintained its extravagant price; and it was not till the eighth century of our era, that by the artifice of two Persian monks who conveyed from China to Rome some eggs of the silk-worm in a hollow cane, the real nature of the substance became known, and the breeding of the wonderful insects was commenced in Europe. In order to afford the reader some data for comparing the value of silk with that of other articles of the Indian trade, we may here mention that at the time the former was sold for its weight in gold, the price of cinnamon was 12*s.* 11*d.* per Roman pound of twelve

ounces; of ginger 3*s.* 10½*d*; of long pepper, 9*s.* 8¼*d.*; of black pepper, 2*s.* 7*d.*; of Indian spikenard, 19*s.* 4¼*d.*; and of myrrh, from 8*s.* 4¾*d.*, to 14*s.* 2½*d.*

The Indian trade, we have hinted, had no mean effect upon the destinies of western Asia, Egypt and the Roman Empire generally, but the reaction upon India itself must have been comparatively slight. In the Periplus of the Erythrean Sea, an account is given of the cargoes exported from the west, and the articles are carefully enumerated by Macpherson in his History of Commerce; but there can be no doubt, notwithstanding, that hard silver formed the grand staple of the remittance. According to Pliny the articles of mere luxury we have mentioned cost upwards of eight hundred thousand pounds annually in money, and these articles were again sold for upwards of a hundred times the original cost. While impoverishing Rome herself, however, this expenditure must have benefited the eastern extremities of the empire; for a great portion of the hundred per centum consisted no doubt of the expences of transit, which thus repaid to these countries a portion of the wealth of which they were otherwise drained by their imperial mistress. The effect of the trade upon India was much more slight. The merchants held but brief communication with their customers, whom they probably viewed in the light of inferiors if not barbarians; and instead of receiving the price of their wares in goods which might influence their habits or stimulate their ingenuity, by far the greater part of the amount was paid to them in money, to be expended in the routine of their usual life.

A new revolution took place in the world which closed the port of Alexandria against the Romans and restored the Indian trade to the Arabs. Persia, Syria, Egypt, Africa, and afterwards Spain—all fell successively before

the standard of the Prophet; and the extraordinary people who now issued like a torrent from their ancestral deserts exhibited as remarkable a genius for trade as for war. In possession of Persia they had approached nearer to India, and they took full advantage of the circumstance. Instead of the circuitous route by the Red Sea, they made the Euphrates once more the line of the traffick—founding Bassora at the junction of that river with the Tigris—and enriched both their original country and their new dominions with the treasures of India. They were not satisfied with receiving goods at second hand, but established a direct commerce with the more eastern parts of India, with the Eastern Archipelago and with China; and religion following in the steps of trade, not only the new doctrines of Mahomed but the Christianity of the Nestorian churches of Persia was preached and preached successfully, in the regions of the farther east.

Constantinople and the other opulent towns of Europe, it may be imagined, were highly impatient at the sudden deprivation of luxuries which habit had converted almost into necessaries, and proportionate efforts were made to obtain the object of their longings. The overland route to the Punjab or the Indus, which we have already adverted to, was reopened and goods imported to Constantinople by way of the Caspian and the Euxine; the Oxus being probably used for a part of the transit, although that river does not fall into the Caspian, as Robertson and many other writers suppose, but into the Aral Sea. Silk was in like manner purchased in the west of China and brought through Thibet along the line of the Himalaya to the Oxus, and thence to Constantinople. The wealth which poured into this city by such long, difficult, and dangerous routes was so great as to retard for some time the ruin of the empire, and for nearly two centuries

Europe continued to be supplied with Indian goods by the metropolis of Constantine.

The crusades interrupted but did not extinguish the Indian trade, which gradually passed, however, into the hands of Venice and Genoa, two commercial republics that had risen into eminence by ministering to the wants of the military maniacs of the time. Venice insinuated herself though at a heavy cost into the mart of Alexandria, while Genoa less fortunately took possession of Constantinople, from which she was driven at the conquest of the Greek Empire by Mohamed II. in 1453. The former republic, therefore, became the great commercial agent of Europe, and did not thrive the less that she was not an importer of Indian goods but a purchaser of them—and generally by barter—in the markets of Egypt and Syria. The value of the Constantinopolitan branch of the trade may be conjectured from the amount of spoil, in gold, silver, silks, gems, spices, and other articles obtained by the crusaders at the sack of the city in 1204. The share of the French alone, according to Villehardouin, was four hundred thousand marks of silver (about eight hundred thousand pounds) nearly seven times the annual revenue of England at that time. The Venetians, in the true spirit of trade, offered to take the whole and give four hundred marks to each knight, two hundred to each private and horseman, and one hundred to each foot soldier; yet it is said that the secret plunder, although forbidden under the penalty of death, greatly exceeded in amount that which was acknowledged. At the final sack of the city under Mahomed II. the booty is estimated at four millions of ducats; but the Italian merchants were at this period the agents of a quickly circulating traffick, and had probably invested but little of their wealth in the splendours of Constantinople.

During the fifteenth century the Venetians may be said to have enjoyed a monopoly of the Indian trade in Europe, and wherever their depôts were fixed it had the effect of showering wealth upon the city or the province. Bruges, and then Antwerp, thus rose into distinction and magnificence, and the merchants of Augsburg, the great emporium for the interior of Germany, became dignitaries of the empire. At the close of the century the measure of Venetian prosperity was full. The taste for the spices, pearls, gems and other treasures of the east had encreased with the encreasing wealth of the western world. Countries had risen into greatness whose inhabitants were savages when the Arabs — the Phenicians — the Egyptians—the Romans—were the carriers of the sea, and the Venetians were now the dispensers of the commodities of India to them all. Their trading ships visited every port in Europe, and their war-galleys kept the piratical states of the Mediterranean in awe; while at home their manufactures of silk, cloths of gold and silver, and vessels of gold, silver, and glass, were the envy of the nations. At this moment a circumstance occurred which changed the current of the destinies of the entire world, east as well as west. Venice fell, and disappeared from the rank of commercial states as completely though more gradually than Tyre or Carthage; and the marble walls of the " tiara of proud towers " which crowned this sea-Cybele now stand amidst the waters of the Adriatic as mournful and only less ruinous than the palaces of Palmyra in the Arabian desert.

This circumstance was the discovery of a route to India by sea round the African continent. According to the geography of Aristotle and the map of Ptolemy which were then in high authority, it seemed clear that India might be reached by sailing *west* from Europe; and this fortunate

mistake gave rise to the discovery of America in 1492, the islands of which the illustrious Genoese accordingly termed the West Indies. Portugal before this time had made great efforts to discover the eastern navigation, and the success of her rival Spain was proportionately annoying,—for the Pope had generously presented the latter country with the whole of the regions discovered and to be discovered through the happy error of Christopher Colon. It was at length settled, however, between the two maritime powers by a treaty which received the sanction of Pope Julius II, that the world should be divided between them, the eastern side of a certain line belonging to Portugal, and the western to Spain; and Portugal then resumed her expeditions round the African continent with such zeal that on the 8th of July, 1497, a fleet sailed from the Tagus under the command of Vasco da Gama, consisting of three vessels of a hundred and twenty, a hundred, and fifty tons, respectively, which reached the coast of Malabar on the 22nd of May in the following year.

This event took place in that barren interval of the history of India between the invasion of Tamerlane and the commencement of the Mogul dynasty under Baber. The remoteness from Central India of Calicut, the capital of Malabar and the principal emporium on the coast, rendered it of little political importance, but the modern Europeans seem to have looked upon its rajah, whom they thought proper to term the Zamorin, as the emperor of the whole country. Vasco da Gama, however, found this potentate to be a very weak and vacillating person, thrown into infinite perplexity by the appearance upon the scene of a new and rival tribe of barbarians, and quite unable to determine whether to attach himself to them, or take the part of the resident Arab merchants

During the early part of the intercourse which ensued, the Portuguese were subjected to every species of annoyance by the intrigues of the Venetians and their other rivals in trade; and when at length successful, they appear to have become so much elated as to forget the legitimate objects of the adventure and think more of political than commercial supremacy. Lisbon, notwithstanding, inherited the vanishing prosperity of Venice, and being able to undersell the latter, became in its turn the chief trading city of Europe. In vain the Venetians united with the Sultan of Egypt for the protection of their mutual interest; for the old route was too expensive to cope with the new, and the dominion of the latter could only be acquired and kept by a great maritime power. In 1506 the dominion of the Portuguese was fairly established by Albuquerque. Calicut was now commanded by a fort of that nation, the island of Goa fortified, Malacca then a great central depôt subdued; and finally, neither Arabs nor Hindoos were permitted to navigate the Indian seas without a passport from the dominant flag.

The pride of the Portuguese was now at its height, and soon degenerated into insolence. Their conduct became so oppressive, their avarice, cruelty and lust so intolerable, that the whole eastern world from the Indian Archipelago to the Gulf of Arabia was at length arrayed against them. The decline of their dominion began; their traders, engaged in perpetual war with the natives, turned into pirates; and as if no element of destruction should be wanting, an order came from Europe in 1594 to convert the idolaters by force. It may be supposed that colonies in this condition, however beneficial to the villains who administered them, could be of little advantage to the parent country; and accordingly when Philip II. of Spain became master of Portugal in 1580, he dis-

covered that the Indian trade was a dead loss, and immediately transferred it to a company of merchants, retaining for the crown only the political and military appointments.

It was not possible for an empire to last much longer which, in the midst of the comparative civilization of the time in Europe, was formed after the worst models of the middle ages. The commandant of every fort was an absolute sovereign within his little territory, and exercised the right of private war, as well as of what in an earlier age was termed haute justice; the captain of every vessel was a sea-robber who cared little about the distinctions of flag; and the higher government officers, up to the viceroy himself, differed little from the others except in the greater magnitude of their share of the spoil. All preyed alike upon the Hindoos and Arabs, and having now the sanction of religion for their crimes, robbery, murder, violation, and sacrilege were deeds of every day. Between whiles, as may be supposed, they turned their arms against each other; and on one occasion, when the goldsmiths and mercers of Goa were in the midst of a battle, the officers of justice took the opportunity of robbing the shops of both.

But the bigotry of Philip determined that the Portuguese dominion should not fall of itself. He sent an army into the Netherlands to re-convert his subjects in that quarter from Protestantism which they had embraced, and not succeeding in this object, after they had become an independent state he seized their ships in the harbours of Lisbon, which they were in the habit of resorting to under neutral colours for Indian goods. The Dutch hereupon, finding themselves shut out from this market, resolved to import for themselves the commodities with which they supplied a great part of Europe; and in

1595, the Company for Remote Countries sent the first Dutch fleet round the Cape, which on arriving at Java immediately commenced a course of successful hostilities against the Portuguese. Numerous other small companies were formed throughout the Netherlands and despatched their vessels in crowds to the scene of action, but all these associations were speedily united by the government into one great Dutch East India Company.

The English, in the meantime, had made various unsuccessful attempts to share directly in that insignificant trade, as Gibbon considers it, which in all ages had the most important results for the west. In one of these gropings of geographical science John Cabot stumbled upon Newfoundland and the continent of North America; in another his son Sebastian established the Russian Company where he intended the China Company; and several other expeditions to discover a route to India by a north-west passage resulted in the formation of the Hudson's Bay Company. The Turkey Company was now organised for the overland trade, and two disastrous expeditions sent round the Cape; till at length, shut out of the Lisbon market by a war with Spain, and from that of the Netherlands by the avaricious spirit of the Dutch, the English set to the work in earnest. In 1600 Queen Elizabeth granted a charter to the Governor and Company of Merchants of London trading with the East Indies, whose capital amounted to 70,000*l.*, and whose fleet consisted of four ships of fourteen hundred tons in all. On the 5th of June, 1602, the first expedition of this association reached Acheen in Sumatra, and was successful, not in purchasing pepper as was intended, for the crops had failed, but in capturing and gutting of its cargo a Portuguese ship, with which the adventurers returned in triumph to England.

Such was the commencement of the direct trade with India of the modern nations of the west. By this time the New World had begun to be studded with the colonies of the Old; the mines of Potosi and Sacotecas had invited and rewarded the enterprise of Spain; and a stimulus had been given from the other side of the Atlantic to the commercial and manufacturing industry of Europe which remains in full activity to this day. The effect of the trade with the east is less obvious, and has given rise to some argument. It has been held on one side that Europe could have derived little benefit from an intercourse with the New World, the reward of which in the precious metals was immediately paid over to India for her luxuries; while on the other hand it has been contended, and more especially by Robertson, that money being itself an article of commerce obtained in exchange for the produce of labour and ingenuity, "the exportation of treasure which has been so much dreaded instead of impoverishing enriches the kingdom." This latter is a sophism easily detected, for it throws two distinct branches of commerce into one circle of transactions. If the eastern trade had demanded goods instead of money, Europe would have been benefited by the new creation of industry just as it was benefited by the western trade, whereas by handing over to India the price obtained in America for European cloths and hard-wares, the same amount of labour and ingenuity was made to serve for both. At the same time it is quite as erroneous to say that Europe lost the benefit of its American trade by buying with money in the markets of the east. That benefit was *already* obtained by the exchange of the products of a new industry for gold and silver, and the transaction was complete. The subsequent transaction with India, the laying out of floating capital in the purchase of luxuries,

was a sign of opulence; and although it did not directly stimulate European industry to any great extent, it did so indirectly by spreading the taste for high-priced articles among the people.

The fate of the Portuguese dominion in India may be told in a single paragraph. Their efforts against the Dutch were vain, because the Arabs and natives ranged themselves on the side of the new comers, and equally vain against the English, a people who already exhibited an extraordinary genius for naval warfare. In 1638 the Dutch expelled the Portuguese from Japan, and in 1656 from Ceylon; and the former nation in a surprisingly short time took the place of the latter as the European masters of the commerce of India—a commerce which is said to have cost the Portuguese by shipwreck alone, between the years 1412 and 1640, one hundred and fifty large vessels and one hundred thousand lives.

At a period when foreign commerce, as we have seen, was little understood by the maritime nations of Europe, the idea of the Dutch East India Company was as happy as it was brilliant and original. The distance of the scene of operations rendered it necessary for large powers to be entrusted to the managers of the trade—powers equivalent to the royal prerogatives; and in the case of Portugal this had been attended by the most unhappy effects. The home government was usually occupied with more pressing matters, and left India to the mercies of its delegates; while at other times its interference was capricious and spasmodic, and exercised without reference to anything but political or military dominion. The consequence was that the trade was at best unproductive to the nation; that the people came to look upon India not as a field of commerce but of rapine and debauchery; and that at length the once dominant flag of the eastern

waters, assailed on all sides by its victims and its rivals, was torn down in the midst of universal execration and contempt. It was now felt that the available treasures of India were its Commerce, and that this could only be managed to advantage by a commercial body; and the Dutch government, in order to secure the benefits of the trade to the nation, consented to delegate even its political power to the Company. The extraordinary anomaly was therefore seen, and for the first time, of an association of merchants armed with authority to make peace and war with sovereign princes, to elect governors, maintain garrisons, and conduct the administration of justice. The Indian trade was no longer in the hands of a prince, ignorant or careless of business, and whose attention was always liable to be withdrawn from it by the more pressing exigencies of sovereignty. It was conducted by experienced and practical men, ruled by one absorbing idea of gain; and so well did the system work that in twenty-one years, the term of the first charter, besides adding to the capital a vast amount in territorial acquisitions, buildings, ships and other indivisible property, they divided nearly thirty million florins among the shareholders—more than four times the original stock.

The first attempts of the English East India Company were weak and timid. Each voyage was a separate concern, the partners subscribing what they chose, or not subscribing at all according to their pleasure. Twelve voyages of this kind employed an aggregate capital of less than half a million, and the average profit made was at the rate of 138 per centum on each voyage. The transactions, however, yielding this apparently large remuneration extended over a medium of seven years, leaving the real returns under twenty per centum per

annum. Macpherson conjectures that if the cost of insurance had been added, the profits would have been further reduced to the usual rate of interest of the period, eight per centum; but he appears to forget that the insurance was actually included in the charges,—not in the form of premium, but in the losses against which the premium is a guarantee.

The first joint-stock account was opened in 1613, but the Company had to fight both Dutch and Portuguese in the eastern seas, as well as to contend against enemies at home. They did both successfully. In 1615 they already possessed a factory at Calicut, and two on the Coromandel coast; one at Surat, Amadavad, Agra, Agmere, and Barrackpoor; one at Malacca; one at Siam; three in Sumatra; three in Java; three in Borneo; one in the Banda islands; one in Celebes; and one in Japan. Mill questions the expediency of these costly establishments, which he says were the creation of the directors, who had a greater interest in the patronage annexed to their offices than in the profits of the Company of which their share was small. This has been well answered by Wilson; and the subject is of much interest, as these factories were the foundation of our empire in the east. Mill's notion that the trade might have been established on the "principle of individual adventure and free competition" is against the evidence of his own narrative, which represents the commerce of India as a prize conquered by rival nations, one from the other, by force of arms. The opinion of Sir Thomas Roe, who was sent at the time as ambassador to the Emperor Jehangir on the part of James I., but at the expense of the Company, is ill supported. The Portuguese were not "beggared," as he alleges, "by keeping of soldiers," but by the monstrous abuses on one side of the ocean and the idiotical neglect

on the other to which we have alluded; and the "dead pays" of the Dutch did not by any means in his day "consume their gains," but on the contrary left a magnificent dividend. As for the Chinese trade of later times mentioned by Mill as a proof by experiment of the ambassador's proposition, it affords us no analogy whatever; for the European nations were always till lately suppliants for the commerce of that country, not the warlike rulers of its seas.

Sir Thomas Roe found the sea-ports and the customs in the Mogul dominions full of abuses, the governors seizing upon the goods at their own prices; but in other respects his account gives a favourable picture of the state of the country. He obtained the redress of some grievances complained of by the English merchants, and a promise of liberty to trade and establish factories in any part of the Mogul dominions, but more especially in Surat, Bengal and Sinde. Although the trade was comparatively trifling at this time, and the Dutch in possession of the ground—more especially of the ports of the great Indian Archipelago—the latter nation was exceedingly desirous of uniting with the English in the commerce or plunder of the eastern seas. This proves at least the success of our arms; and the refusal of the Company to accede to the proposal shows also that the prospects of their business were good. After a time a sort of alliance of friendship rather than a commercial union was signed between the two rival companies; but their feelings of mutual hostility had gained too great a mastery to be subdued by a piece of parchment, and in 1622 the slaughter by the Dutch in the Archipelago of about twenty Englishmen, popularly termed the massacre of Amboyna, gave the signal for our total expulsion from the spice islands.

At this period the principal articles of the Indian trade, including that of Persia, appear to have been spices, indigo, and raw silk. The imports are stated thus by a deputy-governor of the Company in 1621: pepper, 6,000,000 lbs.; cloves, 450,000 lbs.; mace, 150,000 lbs.; nutmegs, 400,000 lbs.; indigo, 350,000 lbs.; and raw silk of Persia, 1,000,000 lbs. These articles brought by the Cape, cost 511,458*l.*; while by the old overland route they would have cost 1,465,000*l.* The value of the Company's joint property was 400,000*l.*; and they employed 10,000 tons of shipping, 2500 seamen, 500 ship-carpenters, and 120 factors in India. During the twenty-one preceding years they had sent out eighty-six ships, of which nine were shipwrecked, five worn out, eleven captured by the Dutch, thirty-six returned with cargoes, and the remaining twenty-five, being still abroad, were not reported. The cargoes of the thirty-six ships cost in India 375,288*l.*, and yielded in England proceeds amounting to 2,004,600*l.* The exports during the period were 319,211*l.* in woollen goods, lead, iron, tin, and other merchandize, and 613,681*l.* in silver. It is interesting to notice these results of a trade of which the exports from the western world are now twelve millions, and the imports eight millions sterling in a single year; and it is still more interesting to reflect that the latter sums bear a much smaller proportion to the extension of which this intercourse is susceptible than the Indian commerce of the beginning of the seventeenth century bears to that of the present day.

The subsequent troubles in England, united with the military occupation held by the Dutch in the eastern seas, to retard the progress of our Indian trade; and for many years the annals of the Company are at once obscure and unimportant. During this interval they made

a settlement in 1640 at Madras, afterwards the capital seat of their sovereignty; and in 1651 took possession of St. Helena, a volcanic rock rising in the midst of the ocean as if specially to serve as a resting-place for mariners on the Indian voyage. In 1651, a surgeon in the service of the Company, named Gabriel Broughton, having by skill or fortune cured one of the daughters of Shah Jehan, made use of the imperial favour to procure the privilege of free trade for the English with Bengal, and may thus be said to have been one of the founders of our eastern dominion. In 1664, the island of Bombay was taken possession of for Charles II., as part of the portion of his wife, a princess of Portugal; but finding the acquisition unproductive, the King made a grant of it to the Company in 1668, on condition of their paying him a yearly rent of 10*l.* in gold.

About this time the Company received from Bantam one hundred and forty-three and a half pounds of tea, which is supposed to have been their first importation of an article destined to become so important a medium of remittance from India. It is mentioned as the usual beverage of the Chinese by Soliman, an Arabian merchant, who wrote about the year 850, but from that period till the middle of the sixteenth century nothing more was heard of it in Europe. At the latter date the Jesuit missionaries describe its properties in China in nearly the same terms we should use to-day; although they state that in Japan the powdered leaves were put into a gilded porcelain cup filled with hot water, and drank as well as the liquid. The Dutch East India Company appear to have supplied almost all the little that was consumed in Europe during nearly the whole of the seventeenth century. In 1660, it must have been an article of consumption in England, as a duty of eight-

pence per gallon of the liquor (a mode of rating which continued till 1689) was charged upon it as well as on chocolate and sherbet, while only half the sum was imposed upon coffee and foreign spirituous liquors.

The rising importance of the Company's business began now to appear from the number of interlopers in the Indian seas, and from the increasing clamour in England against their monopoly. Preserving the court favour, however, they triumphed over all; in addition to their former ample powers they obtained that of admiralty jurisdiction, which enabled them to seize and condemn the ships of private adventurers; and their servants exercised unlimited authority over their countrymen in India. In 1661, they had been invested for the first time with the privilege of making peace and war with the native princes; and in 1687, they found themselves involved—no longer in hostilities with the Dutch and Portuguese—but in an armed contest with the empire. The head-quarters of their trade with Bengal had been for forty years at Hooghly, on the western branch of the Ganges; and the traffic being carried on chiefly with money, the cupidity of the viceroy had been roused, and for many years their factors had been the victims of gross extortion. The Company now determined no longer to submit, and a considerable armament was sent out from England to seize and fortify Chittagong; but, owing to various casualties the expedition was unsuccessful, and the English were for a time compelled to abandon Bengal. This determined Aurungzebe to drive them altogether out of the country, and the factories at Surat, Masulipatam, and Vizagapatam were seized, and the Company's agent, and some of their servants at the last-mentioned place put to death. All these reverses had their due effect. The Company found that their attitude of defiance was

prematurely assumed, and reverting to the humility and the arts of traders, they gained from the condescension or the cupidity of the emperor, a tolerance which they could not obtain by their arms.

The war of the revolution, which was terminated by the treaty of Riswick in 1697, was very unfortunate for the East India Company; for among four thousand two hundred British vessels which fell into the hands of the French, there were several of their homeward-bound ships; and these losses, together with the spirited trade of the interlopers, which continued in spite of the charter, incapacitated them from making any dividend for some years, and brought their unpopularity to a height. But the war had been still more fatal to the national treasury than to theirs, and they were sounded by Government on the subject of a loan. Compliance was necessary, for the separate traders by this time included some of the most distinguished merchants, and would be likely to bid high for the royal favour. They accordingly tendered seven hundred thousand pounds; but their opponents immediately advanced upon the offer to the amount of two millions, on condition of sharing in the privileges of the charter. This was conclusive. The former sum, indeed, was to bear interest at only four per centum, and the latter at double the amount; but borrowers look to the principal not the conditions, and the Government of that day were novices in the art of raising money. In vain the Company, repenting of their ill-timed economy, nearly trebled their offer. A new Company received a charter of privileges in 1698, and a ruinous competition went on till 1702, when a union took place, and in six years afterwards the stocks were completely blended, and the United Company of Merchants trading to the East Indies, commenced their career with

a capital of two millions, and fixed property in India valued at four hundred thousand pounds.

The history of the European commerce with India is now without any very striking events for a considerable number of years. From 1708 to 1730, the imports of the English East India Company rose from 493,257*l.* to 1,059,759*l.*, while the exports show an increase of only about 35,000*l.* Their dividends had risen, in 1723, from five to ten per centum, and then declined to eight per centum, continuing at that rate till 1732. From 1730 to 1744 but little average difference is observable in the amount of imports; but the exports had increased from 135,484*l.* to 476,274*l.*, although a great portion of this was military and other stores. In 1732, the dividend was reduced to seven, and continued so till 1744, when it returned to eight per centum; while, during the same period, the smallest sum divided by the Dutch East India Company was fifteen per centum, to which point it had gradually decreased from twenty-five.

In the year 1698 the Company had purchased some villages in Bengal, destined to form the site of their chief city; and in a few years the factory there had become so prosperous, that in 1707, Calcutta, hitherto subordinate to Madras, was declared a separate presidency; and in ten years after, a sort of charter was obtained from the Emperor Ferokhser establishing the English trade, and granting new privileges. This continued to be acted upon for some time, but events were now hastening on, which, as we have already related, overthrew the dominion of the Moguls, and, as we have now to relate, rendered eventually this famous Company of merchant-adventurers the lords paramount of the empire, and the heretofore village of Calcutta the capital of the eastern world.

It here becomes necessary to observe the position occu-

pied by the French nation in India. So early as 1503 some merchants of Rouen attempted to share with the Portuguese in the advantages of the route between India and Europe, by the Cape of Good Hope; but it was not till a century afterwards that the first French East India Company received a charter from Henry IV. Nothing worthy of notice, however, was effected till the Company of the East Indies was formed by Colbert, which established for a moment the oriental capital in Madagascar, and planted factories on various parts of the continent of India, but with no greater results than sales amounting to nine million livres in twenty years. By the year 1714 their capital stock was expended, and their debts amounted to ten million livres; and although they languished on for some time under a new ten years' charter, they may be considered to have been utterly ruined, when they suddenly became identified with the most extraordinary association the world had ever seen.

The wars and extravagance of Louis XIV. had beggared France, and depreciated the government paper to such an extent, that it was almost useless for circulation, when a Scottish adventurer presented himself on the scene at a moment when the Regent was ready to grasp at a straw for financial salvation. John Law had submitted a scheme of a national bank to the last parliament of Scotland, by which it was rejected; but he now, in the year 1716, succeeded without difficulty in establishing a bank at Paris, the notes of which were soon current throughout Europe, and let loose in France the hoards of money which the panic of the time had locked up. This was the first step—for Law would be satisfied with nothing less than paying off the whole debts of the nation —and in the following year the Company of the West was founded, which immediately absorbed into itself the Com-

pany of Senegal, the Company of the East Indies, the Company of China, the Company of St. Domingo, and the Company of Guinea, with all their property and privileges, and assumed the name of the Company of the Indies. The subscription was opened for fifty thousand shares, but was almost instantly filled up to the amount of a hundred thousand. The government now affected to limit the total number to three hundred thousand; but was soon prevailed upon to indulge the people in one—two—three hundred thousand more. The Parisians sold off their property of every kind to buy stock, and even the poorest were able to participate, as many of the shares were kindly subdivided for their benefit into hundredth parts. The city was deluged with real money, which poured in from the speculators of foreign countries; the price of the necessaries of life rose to extravagance—and so did the stock of the Company of the Indies, till it went beyond a thousand per centum! The bank paper in the meantime was increased to double the amount recommended by Law, and the whole establishment, with its countless notes, was handed over by government, who began to be afraid of the monstrous agent they had created, to the Company of the Indies. The public took alarm at this deluge of fictitious money; some of them demanded cash in exchange; and Law's advice to comply with this demand was disregarded. Gold was banished from commercial transactions; the citizens were ordered to bring all their silver to the bank, with the exception of a small sum for daily use; the coinage was depreciated, the bank paper brought down to a par with it, and the value of shares reduced to five-ninths. The bubble burst, the people were ruined, and Law disappeared.

But the Company of the Indies continued business as a commercial association after its ruin as a financial specu-

lation. It colonized the Mauritius and Bourbon, obtained considerable territorial possessions on the coasts of India, and established the seat of a governor-general in Pondicherry on the Coromandel coast, which became a great and important city. Although exciting much jealousy on the part of the English East India Company, and although the two nations had been fighting desperately in Europe during the whole of the war which followed the death of the Emperor Charles VI., it does not appear that any hostility had taken place between them in India till 1746, when a French fleet presented itself before Madras. The place was unprepared either with troops or conduct for defence, and after sustaining a bombardment for only five days capitulated, the French commander Labourdonnais engaging to restore the settlement for a moderate ransom, — an engagement which the governor of Pondicherry, Dupleix, did not ratify. After the violation of the treaty of ransom many of the inhabitants betook themselves to Fort St. David, another English settlement on the Coromandel coast, twelve miles south of Pondicherry, and the agents of the company there assumed the functions of the presidency of Madras.

The French at Madras were now threatened by the native prince of that part of the country, the Nabob of the Carnatic, whom they had dissuaded from assisting the English by the promise of delivering up the settlement into his hands. Finding that he was deceived, the Nabob invested the place with an army numerous enough, as he no doubt thought, to sweep the Europeans into the sea; but he was defeated with great ease, and the lesson marks an important epoch in the history of India. In the warlike time of the Portuguese the Indians had been too severely handled by these strangers to despise them, and although the native historians affect to talk slightingly

of the collision, they cannot disguise the fact that Goa had been taken from them again and again, and that in 1570 the united forces of Beijapoor and Ahmednuggur had been unable to recapture it. The Dutch and English were naval powers, at first half-pirates half-merchants; but subsequently settling down as peaceful traders, were only too happy to have their traffick patronized by the chiefs of the country. The later outbreak of the English in Bengal had been severely punished; and although successful at sea on the western coasts of India, they had been permitted to continue their trade even there only by the most abject submission to Aurungzebe. But the Europeans now appear in a new character; and the victory of Madras, taking place at the moment of the dissolution of the empire, may be considered as an important event in history.

The French now turned their arms against Fort St. David; but this place was not only defended by the English garrison but by the army of the Nabob numbering ten thousand men. The odds were too many; and even when he had succeeded in detaching the Nabob from the English interest, Dupleix was unable to execute his project. The British government were now seriously alarmed, and the most formidable expedition that had ever been sent by any European power to the Indian seas was despatched against Pondicherry. The attempt was a miserable failure. The siege was raised after the trenches had been opened thirty-one days; Dupleix received the congratulations even of the native princes; and the English were regarded in India as a subordinate people. This was in 1748, and in the following year the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle was signed between the two governments in Europe.

The European conflict, and its extension to the Indian

settlements of the two nations, had now converted the East India Companies of both into military powers, provided with munitions of war, and burthened with the support of soldiers useless during peace. It had excited a spirit of rivalry very different from the competition of trade; and it had drawn upon the belligerents the eager attention of the native princes at a time when the Mogul empire was rending in pieces. At this period the French commerce was greatly reduced in value. The silver so lavishly imported into India had at the same time raised the goods in price and diminished the excellence of their fabric; and the consequence was, that instead of a hundred and fifty livres on each share of five hundred livres, hitherto divided by the Company by order of the king, it was found necessary in 1746 to reduce the dividend suddenly to seventy, and in 1750 to fifty livres. The question began to be asked by government whether the trade was worth carrying on on such a footing — whether it might not be practicable in the convulsed state of the country to secure some advantage which should place them at the head of all competitors; and in Dupleix the governor-general (a royal officer) they had an agent more likely to go in advance of any scheme of ambition, however wild and daring, than to meet it with the suggestions of caution. As for the English, if they had any views of the kind they were less precise and determinate. They only felt that they were in the midst of the jarring elements of a great revolution, and that they must do something, if they but knew what. In this part of their career they seem to be governed less by volition than by a blind fatality.

It was now a few years after the invasion of Nadir Shah, and when India was an empire only in name. The soubahdars or viceroys of the provinces were sovereigns; the nabobs, or governors of great districts, were at-

tempting to become so; and even the zemindars or smaller governors under these grasped at power, independent alike of their superiors and the empire.* At this time (in 1749) the Rajah of Tanjore, a little Hindoo principality whose sovereigns had been permitted to act as zemindars,—that is to say, to hand over the revenue to Delhi when compelled to do so by an army,—had been deposed by his subjects, and repaired to Fort St. David to solicit the assistance of the English. The latter, either in imitation of a more important step taken by the French, which we shall mention presently, or merely because they wanted employment for their idle troops, complied; and although unsuccessful in the object of their expedition, they obtained a pension for their protegé, and the cession of a small district as a reward for the Company.

The French proceedings were of a more ambitious nature. The soubahdar of the Deccan, whom in the preceding Book we have styled Asof Jah from his more important office, but who is mentioned by Mill, Raynal and other writers as Nizam-ool-Moolk, had died in 1748 and left a disputed succession; while at the same time the nabobship of the Carnatic was contended for by two claimants. Dupleix saw that the time was come, and throwing himself into the midst of the game he turned the scale by the desperate gallantry of the French. The rival soubahdar now applied to the English for assistance, and thus the two companies of merchants

* In the decline of the empire everything fell into confusion,—even the names of the great officers of state, which were usurped at pleasure. A nabob, literally a deputy, as we see by the firmans of the emperors, was originally the "lord of the soubahdaree;" but the above distinction (adopted by Mill) of greater and smaller governors is at least convenient, and we use it for the same reason that we write *nabob* instead of *nawab*. A zemindar seems originally to have been a grantee of lands from the crown, in contradistinction to a jageerdar, whose estate was usually held at pleasure.—See the Appendix to Dow, vol. iii.

were brought into the field against each other for the first time as allies of the native princes.

The arms of Dupleix were completely successful, not only in the contest for the succession, but against the Patan auxiliaries of the successful soubahdar, who revolted against him. That viceroy was killed in the conflict, and a successor appointed—the eldest surviving son of Asof Jah—by the influence of the victors. Dupleix was made governor of the whole coast from the river Krishna to Cape Comorin, and the aspirant for the nabobship of the Carnatic, whose cause he had espoused, his deputy at Arcot. The French were now supreme in the Deccan, and the warring princes of India beheld in the wandering merchants of Europe a new and formidable power entering with military pomp and circumstance upon the eventful scene.

The English made some feeble irresolute attempts to arrest the current of French influence, and they appear to have been goaded into serious action more by insult than injury. They took the part, however, of the unsuccessful candidate for the Carnatic, and at length, in 1751, Captain Clive, a daring and talented young man who had disengaged himself from the civil service of the Company in the convulsions of the time, captured Arcot in brilliant style, and this was followed by the total defeat of the combined French and native troops. The war now raged with such fury as to alarm the directors of both companies at home; and in 1754 Dupleix was recalled, and the dispute settled by commission; leaving the English in possession of all they had contended for, and the French minus all they had gained.

The interest excited, however, by the affairs of the Peninsula was eclipsed by a greater emergency that occurred in Bengal. The soubahdar of that province, a

debauched, ignorant and violent man, shared in the surprise and distrust with which the princes of India regarded the change of character which had taken place in the European merchants ; and either with a view to possess himself of the treasures of Calcutta, or with that of crushing one of the two powers before the tide of their battle should roll, as was threatened, into his dominions, he invested the English capital with an army. The citizens fled, with their governor and captain-commandant at their head, and with such ill-concerted haste that one hundred and forty-six individuals were left behind by the vessels, of whom one hundred and twenty-three were stifled before the morning by the closeness of the prison into which they were thrust, which this calamity rendered famous under the name of the Black Hole of Calcutta. The town was retaken by Clive, now lieutenant-colonel and deputy-governor of Madras, with almost as much ease as it was lost, and the city of Hoogly at twenty-three miles distance plundered. The intelligence of a new European war now reached the conqueror, and fearful of the consequences which might ensue from a junction of the French in Bengal with the Moguls, he would fain have made peace with the soubahdar and secured at the same time the neutrality of the rival nation. A reinforcement from Bombay, however, changed his views. He attacked and captured the French factory of Chadernagore, and perceiving from the soubahdar's determination to support the rival party that there was no hope for the English but in his destruction, entered into intrigues for his deposition from the vice-royalty.

India was now in one general convulsion. The third invasion of Ahmed Shah, as we have recorded, had left Delhi a heap of ruins, and the destroying armies of the Mahrattas were traversing the fated country from end to end. The viceroys were left to protect themselves as

they might, and their dominions presented on a smaller scale all the disorganization of the empire. The English had no difficulty but that of choosing among the ambitious traitors who offered to lend themselves to their views for the prize of the viceroyalty; and on the 23rd of June, 1757, all things being prepared, their army reached the field of Plassey, where the soubahdar was encamped. His forces consisted of 50,000 foot, 18,000 horse, and 50 pieces of cannon; while that of Clive mustered no more than 900 English, 100 Topases and 2,100 sepoys. The battle, if it be deserving of the name, was fought by the artillery; and the cannonade continued the greater part of the day, the soubahdar becoming more terrified as the sound was prolonged. At length the covenanted traitor, Jaffier Khan, was seen deserting with his troops, upon which the English advanced to the attack, the viceroy fled, and Bengal was lost and won.

Such in a few words was the origin of British ascendancy in India. The naval empire of the Portuguese did not extend beyond some inconsiderable portions of the coast, and even their name was little known in the inland parts of the country. The same may be said of the Dutch, whose chief dominion was in the Eastern Archipelago. The French and English commenced their intercourse as humble traders, ready to elbow their way without ceremony among their European rivals, but entertaining a profound reverence for the vast and apparently mighty country in which their transactions lay. The war between these two nations would have been attended with no greater results to India than the war between the Dutch and Portuguese, had not the empire of the Moguls been at the moment in a state of dissolution. The momentary dominion acquired by the French was the result of the disorganization of the Deccan; and the battle

of Plassey was merely a link in the chain of circumstances, — a necessary consequence of the cupidity and tyranny of the soubahdar — his infractions of the charter under which the English traded—his seizure of Calcutta—and his espousal of the cause of the hostile nation. Clive was sent to defend his countrymen, not to subdue India, and he was under orders to return to Madras at a certain period, which he took the responsibility of disobeying rather than leave the English in Bengal to extermination. Ambition may have urged on the successors of the Moguls, in the career we shall shortly have to trace, but it did not open the way. In less than three years from the epoch at which we have arrived, the battle of Paniput was fought, the Affghan withdrew from his last foray gorged with blood and booty, the Mahratta power was shattered to pieces at a blow, the confederacy of the Indian princes was broken up, the throne was vacant even of the shadow of a king, and its heir was a powerless adventurer in Bengal. Is it unreasonable to suppose that at this crisis it was *necessary* for another dominion to arise in India? or that Providence, controlling to its service the fears, the avarice, the ambition, the lust, the cruelty, the phrenzy of men, had ordained that the light of a new civilization, however faint and gradual in its beginning, should dawn upon the ancestral darkness of the East?

Up to this period, however, very little intermingling could have taken place of the two races; for the amount of the trade carried on between them was still comparatively insignificant. A variety of causes concurred to limit the transactions of the East India Company, such as the distracted state of the empire, the interference of private traders, and their own unhealthy system of monopoly; so that, if we deduct from their exportations

the amount of treasure and that of military stores, a very small amount of British produce in the year will appear to have found its way through them into India, for the purposes of barter. Their importations would exceed this amount by that of the deductions we have mentioned; but after all, the entire trade, so far from being of paramount importance in a national point of view, was in reality very little worthy of the interest it excited.* In speculating on this subject, however, it is usual to overlook the great change that had taken place in the general commerce of the west. A hundred new markets had been opened since the luxuries of India roused the indignation of the Roman moralists, and as many more since they made the fortunes of the trading states of the middle ages. The little island whose destinies we are now considering (because the destinies of India are linked with hers), whose exports at the time when Venice was in her pride of place consisted almost entirely of raw wool to the amount of about two hundred thousand pounds a year, sent abroad to the whole world at the downfal of the Mogul empire eleven millions worth of goods, chiefly manufactures. In this comparatively vast business the trade of India was only a solitary item. But it was that item which produced the

* M'Culloch states, that at an average of the eight years, ending with 1741, the value of the Company's exports to India and China amounted only to 157,944*l.* 4*s.* 7*d.* a year; and during the seven years, ending with 1748, only to 188,176*l.* 16*s.* 4*d.* He thinks, therefore, that, deducting the value of military stores included in these sums, the real amount of British produce sent out on a legitimate adventure could hardly have exceeded 150,000*l.* a year! The annual average export of bullion, he adds, during the latter period was not more than 548,711*l.* 19*s.* 2*d.* The trade between the two countries, however, was probably much more valuable. In 1760, the general trade of Great Britain, according to a table in Macpherson's Annals of Commerce (vol. iii. p. 339), stood thus:—Official value of imports, 10,683,595*l.* 10*s.* 4*d.*; and of exports, 15,781,175*l.* 13*s.* 10*d.*; of which India received 1,161,670*l.* 6*s.* 0*d.*, and furnished 1,785,679*l.* 11*s.* 1*d.*

extraordinary results we have undertaken to describe. It was that item which was the cause of a change in the Eastern world so prodigious that the most expansive minds are unable to grasp its proportions, or estimate its probable extent. As for the East India Company, they were armed with sovereign power by circumstances which they did not create, and could not control; and the unproductive monopoly granted to their prayers served as the means of inducing, or compelling them to exercise it. It is curious to notice the twofold character they assume in history: in one point of view, being simply an association of traders, harassed by the controversies of merchants and economists, and impeded by the jealousies of Parliament and the nations, yet blundering bravely on under the guidance of selfish interest or ambition; while in another they are the unconscious agents of Providence or fatality, working out with blind and obstinate zeal a revolution, of which we are now only in the beginning, but which will eventually change the condition and character of one-half of the human race.

CHAPTER II.

INTERNAL INDUSTRY AND THE INDUSTRIOUS CLASSES.

We have remarked, that civilization could hardly have been much affected by the commerce of the Indians with the natives of the West. A few factories along the coast, and a very few in the interior, of a great country could have produced no observable modification in manners and character; and the early Portuguese were the only Europeans who mingled their blood in marriage with the natives. The purchases besides (as we have already observed) having been made, from the earliest times, for the most part in the precious metals, although stimulating to a certain extent the industry of the people in production, could have given no new turn to their ingenuity. A portion of the money was spent in jewels—their simple dress and domestic appliances submitting to no innovation; a portion was buried in the earth—a practice which the tyranny of their feudal lords had introduced, and which foreign invasions and incessant civil

disturbances perpetuated; and a portion, finding its way to the treasury, was expended in public works, in the support of the army, and in the pageantries of the court. As for the circulating medium, it was always comparatively small in amount; because it must have been here, as well as elsewhere, in proportion to the commodities exchangeable for money, and because none was required either for foreign commerce or taxes. Some of these causes of the scarcity of money are seen in operation at the present day; and to such an extent, that when there is the slightest interruption in the importation of silver, it is found extremely difficult to collect the land tax, since this is no longer paid in kind.

A country in this state may possess great treasures, and yet the people remain poor; but Mill looks upon the accounts of the enormous spoil carried off by the first invaders as entirely fabulous, for the singular reason that they are evidently exaggerated. It was not the villages, however, that were plundered but the palaces and temples; and these may have been full of wealth and yet the people have had little more to lose than their lives. India never appears to have exported treasure, and the booty of her first ravishers was the collection of ages, subsequently reproduced by the industry of the countless multitudes of a people individually poor, and by the increased rapacity of some rulers, and the better arranged plans of others, in the collection of the revenue. From an early period the precious metals flowed into India from the west. It was the complaint of the Roman economists, that by this trade they imported only luxuries in exchange for solid gold and silver, and to an extent, according to Pliny, which drained the empire of a hundred million sesterces in the year, computed by Dr. Arbuthnot to be equivalent to 807,291*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* In modern times

the trade rose into importance at the same moment with the discovery of the new world; and it is supposed by Raynal that the Spaniards must otherwise have abandoned their most productive mines, in consequence of the depreciation which would have taken place in the value of silver from over supply. From all these causes, however poor the people might be the country was so rich in treasure, that even in the last days of the empire Nadir Shah, as we have before related, was able to plunder Delhi of twelve millions sterling in money and plate (the lowest calculation that has been made), besides jewels to an inestimable amount.* In his time Khojeh Abdulkurreem, a Cashmerian of distinction whose memoirs, written in a plain matter-of-fact style, have been translated by Gladwin, and whose historical account extends from 1739 to 1749, was astonished at the wealth he observed. "Hindostan," says he, "has been frequently plundered by foreign invaders, and not one of its kings ever gained for it any acquisition of wealth; neither has the country many mines of gold and silver, and yet Hindostan abounds in money, and every other kind of wealth. The abundance of specie is undoubtedly owing to the large importations on the ships of Europe and other nations, many of whom bring ready money in exchange for the manufactures and natural productions of the country. If

* Khojeh Abdulkurreem, who accompanied Nadir Shah on his return from Hindostan, describes a tent constructed by the barbarian, for the display of his plunder. It was covered, he tells us, with fine scarlet broadcloth, the lining being of violet-coloured satin, upon which were representations of all the birds and beasts in the creation, with trees and flowers, the whole made of pearls, diamonds, rubies, emeralds, amethysts, and other precious stones. The tent poles (of which the pins were of massive gold) were decorated in the same manner; and in the middle stood the famous Peacock Throne, with a screen on each side, exhibiting the figures of two angels, in precious stones.

this is not the cause of the prosperous state of Hindostan, it must be owing to the peculiar blessing of God."

The position of the producers of this wealth was and is so peculiar, that in order to comprehend the wants and prospects of India it is necessary to give much attention to it.

In examining the condition of the country, so far as this is known to us, at the commencement of the Mahomedan conquest, we see the worst features of feudalism without one of those elements of change which produced so happy a result in Europe. Religion without a hierarchy, war without a permanent army, law without independent functionaries,—no materials existed out of which the middle classes could be formed, the strength and stamina of a kingdom. The brahmins were merely one of the tribes of the people, possessing peculiar privileges and inheriting a traditional sanctity. They exercised no political influence as a body; they had no pontifical sovereignty, no institutions, no depositories of wealth; and it was not their vocation, like that of other early priesthoods, to refine and inform the people even by their elegant vices, and then when no longer necessary as the instruments of civilization, to submit to a change themselves conformable with the advancing spirit of the age.* They were not mechanics nor artists like the monks of Europe; they were not like them farmers, agriculturists, gardeners, improving even the surface of the earth in the domain of their convents, and training up the people to habits of industry. Their business was

* See, for brief comparative notices of eastern and western civilization, Colonel Sleeman's Rambles and Recollections of an Indian Official *passim*. This work, notwithstanding the extreme modesty of its title, contains numerous views of the Indian character that are always judicious and sometimes original and profound.

merely to perform ceremonies, and to transmit to posterity the knowledge of an earlier literature; and their prerogatives were to commit crime with comparative impunity, and in some parts of India to enjoy certain fantastic privileges repulsive to modesty and honour.

In time of war the army was collected with reference to the grandeur of the prince, not to the magnitude of the undertaking; it was subsisted more by plunder than pay; and on the return of peace the soldiers were disbanded, without occupation or resources, their habits of industry and their sentiments of honesty and humanity destroyed, to prey upon the country. Just so it was in Europe. "They betook themselves, almost of necessity, to their original and only trade of blood, and became, in the words of an excommunication fulminated against them and their protectors in 1179 by the third Council of Lateran, such terrific vagabonds, 'ut nec ecclesiis nec monasteriis deferant, nec viduis ac pupillis, non pueris aut senibus, non cuilibet parcant ætati aut sexui, sed more paganorum omnia perdant et vastant.'"* In Europe, however, the extremity of the evil led to its cure. Instead of multitudes of troops hired for the occasion and then dismissed, standing armies were organized and kept up, their numbers regulated by considerations of necessity and economy, and war became an honourable profession, contributing its quota to the lower and middle classes, and to the aristocracy of the country.

Among the Hindoos the want of a law of primogeniture must have rendered all classes equal, were it not for the practical distinction in favour of those trusts, such as the government of a village, or the collection of the revenue for a district, which may be considered as fiefs held under the crown. The only aristocracy, therefore, con-

* Ritchie's "Wanderings by the Seine," vol. ii. p. 26.

sisted of government officers; and there were no great manufacturing establishments to gather the industry of the district into a focus, and by enriching individuals and families, to form the materials for the middle classes, and promote the arts of refinement among the people. On looking backwards, in fact, along the vista of history, instead of being surprised at the non-appearance of the same progression of events we find in Europe, we are at first sight puzzled to conceive by what principle the moral and social chaos before us received even that strange and peculiar arrangement, to which our western prejudices hardly accord the name of civilization.

But when we examine more closely the surface of society, we find the people gathered into small and regular communities, which overspread, like a net-work, the whole area of the country; and in this extraordinary institution, the village-system of India, the origin of which is lost in antiquity, we gradually discover a solution of the enigma. These villages were the rallying points by which the population held fast, even in the wildest political convulsions. They were the depositories of the knowledge of their ancestors, and schools of manners in which one generation was taught to be as nearly as possible a reflection of the last.

Millar, in his "English Government," affirms this to be "a custom introduced in times of extreme barbarity and disorder;" but, for our own part we are disposed to consider it rather as an evidence of the early civilization of India. To this day a great portion of the country is a jungle, the haunt of wild beasts; and it is dangerous as well as expensive for a villager to have his fields or his homestead at any considerable distance from the rest. The necessity, therefore, which originated those communities is obvious; but in the *uniformity* of their constitution are visible the traces of some paramount power,

which long before the dawn of history must have introduced a political connection among the isolated masses of the people. Wild beasts were the first enemies which caused the settlers in the wilderness to consolidate their little territories; but the neighbourhood of wilder men introduced the necessity for a fixed government; while the residence of a revenue collector bound the community to the state without affecting its social independence. The villagers, left to their own management and to the mercy of events, exchanged their commodities, entered into alliances of friendship, quarrelled and waged war, but without dreaming of escape from the public tax which seemed an inevitable condition of their existence. It will be seen, therefore, that they resembled in some respects the communes of the middle ages, and that the name by which they are popularly distinguished can convey no idea of the real nature of their constitution to a European reader.

The personnel of the Bengal villages was as follows: —The zemindar, or government collector; the comptroller of accounts; the registrar; middle men between the zemindar and the ryots; the head ryots; police-officers and watchmen; and the heads of the various trades. Besides the agricultural population the trades were,—astrologers, physicians, chandlers, oilmen, confectioners, money-changers, money-lenders, workers in leather, gold and silversmiths, barbers, masons, cowkeepers, washermen, wine-merchants (who supplied also, but less openly, opium and bang), fishermen, grain-dealers, greengrocers, pedlars, spice and drug men, makers of shell-bracelets, and a variety of other callings followed by any of the lower castes indiscriminately.

In the Deccan the system was similar in effect, though somewhat modified in its officers; and it is remarked by

Mountstuart Elphinstone, in his report on the territories conquered from the Peshwa, that "those communities contain in miniature all the materials of a state within themselves, and are almost sufficient to protect their members if all other governments were withdrawn." In them the Patail was the chief magistrate, held in office by a grant from government. He was the head of the police, and of the administration of justice, and at the same time the collector of the revenue; and his emoluments consisted of lands and fees, with various little distinctions and privileges, all of which, as they exist at the present day, are catalogued in a deed of sale (for the office, it appears, is saleable) appended to the report just referred to. Besides his share of the produce of the land, he received even a portion of certain unripe grain which was eaten roasted as a sort of seasonable delicacy; a small exaction of from one to two annas, taken from travellers who stopped at the village; a pair of shoes once a year; one cloth in the year of the description woven on each loom; and a contribution on market-days and fairs from the shopkeepers in the article in which they dealt. He enjoyed also an annual present from government on the full payment of the revenue; and among his honorary distinctions, when baking bread on the festival of the Holee, he had the privilege of carrying it to the tree where the worship was performed, with the village music playing before him; and in like manner, on the Polse Amauass, his bullocks, after walking in procession round Hanuman, were led home with music.

Next to the patail was the registrar, who kept a record of the measurement of the village lands, a list of the inhabitants and their dues, and a detailed account of the revenue; and who acted, likewise, as accountant, notary public, and even letter-writer to the community. He was

sometimes paid in lands, but often in fees. The changalla assisted the two former functionaries; the watchman watched both the village lands generally, and each individual's fields, and was besides the public messenger and guide. The silversmith had the charge of assaying all money paid either to government or individuals.

The expenses of the village were in general defrayed by a tax on the cultivators, amounting to one-tenth, and sometimes even to one-fifth part of the public revenue. They consisted of the maintenance of the temple, pensions and charities, ceremonies and festivals, alms and entertainments to guests, especially to brahmins and fakirs; public amusements, such as tumblers, dancers, &c.; nuzzurs to superiors; offerings to the patail and other functionaries on occasions of condolence or congratulation, expenses of the patail in the transaction of public affairs, and fees of peons stationed in the village. In addition to these, there were the repairs of the village walls, the entertainment of troops for defence, and sometimes a sop to propitiate a powerful enemy, or keep down a dangerous insurgent. When the village contracted a debt, it was gradually paid by an annual assessment, or else by grants of land rent free, the cultivators making good the deficiency to the revenue. Small grants were also made for temples or to brahmins, but in such cases government always acquiesced.

In the composition of an Indian village, we must not omit what frequently forms, even at the present day, an important material in its industry. Robbery is one of the most ancient of the Hindoo trades, and it received in the earliest times with which we are acquainted the sanction and protection of the laws. The military, when disbanded, had no choice, they took to the road from necessity, and as government might want their services again, it was

necessary that they should be allowed to support themselves. This permission accordingly was given on the simple provision that they should not exercise their calling within the territory, and they were required to deliver up a portion of their booty to the magistrate. Thus the various states when not at war with each other were at robbery; and thus a character of legality was given to the profession which remains to this hour in the feelings of the people, although it has long since been expunged from the laws. The entire population of many villages in central India are still robbers by profession, as they no doubt were in more ancient times; and they continue harmless to their immediate neighbours, transacting their business as far north sometimes as the Indus, and as far south as Bombay and Madras. On being summoned by their leaders, they march to the scene of action, which they approach with muffled faces, and give notice of their presence by firing a matchlock, on which signal the male inhabitants instantly take to flight, leaving their wives and children to their fate. Their collection of the booty, however, is seldom attended by cruelty, although they have been known to have recourse to torture in cases of concealment of valuables. On their return they render thanks to the god they worship and give a fair proportion of the spoil to his priests. And why should not the proceedings of these marauders be sanctified by religion, since the laws which originally legalised them were the inspiration of the deity? They never proceeded, in fact, upon an expedition without invoking their god, and taking the auspices to ascertain his will; and having thus discharged their religious, and also their social duties, in so far as their family and neighbours are concerned, they had rarely any fear of being looked upon as less respectable members of society on account of their profession.

Within those highly curious institutions, there were others quite as independent. Each trade or profession that was confined to a particular caste formed a society, or club, or *guild*, regulated by by-laws, enforced with the utmost strictness. Expulsion was attended by consequences not only distressing to the individual, but ruinous to his family, and was, in fact, to the Pagan of India what excommunication was, some centuries ago, to the Christian of Europe. He became an object of contempt and scorn; he dared not assist at religious ceremonies; and even his own relations were forbidden to eat in his company. At the present day, we are told by Colonel Sleeman, all infringements upon the rules of the class are punished by fines, and any fine furnishes a feast for the members. The proceedings are managed with great solemnity, exciting a corresponding feeling of anxiety and terror on the part of the offender; and the sentences are pronounced by the judges seated in a circle on the grass, while the convict stands on one leg in the centre listening to his doom!

The advantage or disadvantage of this subdivision of the trades into castes has been frequently discussed; but it seems to us to be very clear that its effect upon the industrial arts must be similar to that of the general system of caste upon the moral progress of the people. Its deadening influence, in fact, is obvious in the machinery and utensils of the Hindoos, which at this day have all the rudeness which might be expected in the very infancy of civilization. Even the loom, for instance, from which their ingenuity produces such exquisite results, is formed of rough poles of timber tied together. Their sugar-mill is merely a huge pestle and mortar worked by a horse. In their spinning, notwithstanding, their weaving, their embroidery, they can hardly be excelled. They have all the appearance of

a people engaged in a perpetual, and in a few rare instances, a successful struggle, with some dire fatality, which has sat for ages like a nightmare upon their genius; and in another chapter we shall see the liberating effect of European intercourse, and watch the rapid progress of the mechanical arts in India, under the mere instinct of imitation.

The great staples of Hindoo industry were, as among other nations, the articles necessary for food and clothing. Their diet, however, was little more than boiled rice or millet, and salt, and their dress little more than a thin coarse cotton cloth round their loins; and the materials for both were obtained in abundance from a soil which the frequent fallows consequent on war maintained, except in seasons of famine, in a state of fertility. Their huts were merely frames of bamboo covered with reed-matting; and the furniture and utensils of corresponding simplicity and poverty. But while the mass of the people lived in this way, the princes and aristocracy—for there were no middle classes—indulged in much barbaric pomp and glitter; and thus among the naked artificers of Hindostan, goldsmiths, jewellers, and workers in ivory and fine woods were almost as common as weavers and basket-makers.

This contrast between the two extremes of society is rendered the more striking by the account given by Arrian of the cargoes imported from Egypt into Patala on the Indus, which included fine woollen and linen cloths, precious stones and aromatics unknown in India, coral, storax, wrought silver, and wine. From the same cause the weavers were expert in the most delicate manufactures of cotton, the various fabrics of which, forming part of the return cargoes, include some that were ornamented with flowers. Indeed it is to be observed, that in

the early ages no raw materials were brought from India at all, with the exception of silk, which was not produced there, but in China. In the arts connected with the loom, embroidery, and dyeing in different colours (equivalent to our calico-printing), the Indians were equally skilful; and the engraving on gems was brought so early to some degree of perfection, that the invention of the process has been attributed to them. The remains of temples, it should be added, whether subterranean or otherwise, in various parts of the country, indicate a knowledge of the proportions and elegancies of architecture which is quite irreconcilable with the low estimate formed by Mill and some others of the refinement of the people; although, on the other hand, it cannot be denied that Mahomedan taste, working by the hands of the Hindoos, did much, at a later period, to elevate the art.

The peasantry, however, who produced the cotton for clothing and the grain for food, formed in all ages the great majority of the labouring population; and their poverty, as a body, may be inferred from the fact stated by Colonel Sleeman, that in the present day the stock and implements of a farmer do not exceed in value one half-year's rent of his lands. The produce of the fields was transported to market on the backs of bullocks, for there were hardly any roads for wheeled carriages, no canals of transit, and only two navigable rivers. The disadvantages under which the cultivators laboured may be conceived, since we know that in the present day the transport of goods by means of bullocks adds, in good seasons, a hundred per centum to the cost for every hundred miles, and sometimes as much as two hundred per centum in bad seasons. Thus there was hardly any possibility of pouring in supplies to a district affected by blight or other causes of scarcity, and the consequence

was that the scarcity became a famine, and the people died in tens of thousands. Setting aside, however, the accidents of nature, it cannot be denied that the ancient village system worked so far well that it neutralized, as regarded the people, many of the evils inherent in the nature of the government. Those primitive communes were to a certain extent independent. The inhabitants were united by the same interest; they were held together by community of danger; and the necessity of rallying round their head men in cases of emergency introduced order and submission to authority. As for the land-tax they paid to government, it was the condition of their existence. They subdivided the lands among their children—they sometimes even alienated them by sale; but these changes had nothing to do with the tax which still clung to the soil. When government, on the other hand, gave away, as it occasionally did, the lands of the ryots, this was a mere legal fiction, for in reality it gave away nothing more than its own revenue. The cultivators remained as usual in possession of the fields, and it was a matter of indifference to them to whom they paid the stipulated share of the produce. It is said, indeed, that the law declared the sovereign to be the heir of all his subjects, and thus made him the proprietor of the whole country; but if such a law ever existed, it had become a dead letter before the birth of history. The rights of the ryot were secured by the use and wont of ages, and, whatever its origin may have been, the understanding between the state and its subjects was complete.

The comparative isolation of the villages could hardly be favourable to the progress of industry. There was, generally speaking, no temptation to produce more than the local consumption demanded; and where producers

and consumers alike were wedded to the customs of their ancestors, there could be no emulation in improvement. In a very early stage of civilization there is no attempt at the division of labour, except that which gives war and hunting to the men, and drudgery to the women; but even in the earliest period of Hindoo history we find the people divided into separate trades and callings, which descended in their families like an inheritance. This was everywhere, perhaps, one of the first steps to refinement, although usually the system, when its social necessity was no longer felt, gave way under the influence of circumstances, and occupations came to be chosen according to the taste or opportunities of the individual. In India, however, in this as well as almost everything else, religion gave stability to customs and prescriptions; for there the lawgivers were not satisfied with establishing a system which should endure till it was worn out by time, or left behind in the progress of society. They bound the trades in the fetters of caste, and men followed the employment of their ancestors as a matter of piety as well as prudence. It has been argued that this arrangement would probably tend to the advancement of the different branches of industry, the son inheriting the knowledge of his father, and adding to it his own; but such a result does not seem to have taken place. Generation after generation passed away of these hereditary artizans, leaving their trades to their descendants just as they had received them from the hands of their ancestors; and to this day the few machines and implements in common use present a simplicity of construction, and a strange rudeness of form, which are the best guarantee of their antiquity. This is the case even with the wheel, the reel, and the loom, with which they perform such wonders. The gold and silver smiths work

with tools which excite the ridicule of Europeans; and the carpenter, sitting on the ground, and holding the wood on which he operates with his foot, is satisfied with a saw, a hammer, a chisel, and a sort of adze. The brazier and blacksmith answer to the wandering tinkers of Europe, but have fewer implements, and rarely anything more than a stone for an anvil.

It can hardly be doubted that the Mahomedan rule had some considerable effect upon the internal industry of the country. Even the superaddition, among a large body of the people, of the muslin robe and the turban to the Hindoo waistcloth, must have extended greatly the cultivation of cotton; while the taste for barbaric splendour in jewels and other ornamental articles seems to have been increased, rather than otherwise, by the conquerors. Even some of the earliest princes of the new dynasty paid great attention to the roads, to their protection from robbers, to the construction of bridges, to the erection of caravanserai for the accommodation of travellers—all things of great importance to the safety and extension of trade. Akbar established numerous horse-posts in correspondence with the capital, and instituted endowments for the express purpose of facilitating internal intercourse. It is supposed that in his reign wheel-carriages were used, which, together with the roads adapted for them, entirely disappeared during the convulsions preceding the overthrow of the empire. The effect, however, of these improvements was not steadily progressive, and perhaps, on the whole, has been exaggerated by most writers. Everything depended upon the taste and temper of the reigning sovereign, and on the length of the breathing time he enjoyed from intestine war. The Moguls were numerous enough to set a fashion in dress to those who could afford to follow it,

and refined enough to improve upon the architectural taste of the Hindoos; but they were too few to introduce any remarkable changes in the habits of the people, and their lower classes at least appear to have been gradually absorbed into the masses of the conquered.

Sir Thomas Roe, in the early part of the seventeenth century, describes the manual arts as having been in an advanced state; but notwithstanding, it may be a question whether any improvement of great importance had taken place since the epoch of the Khiljie dynasty, nearly a century before the invasion of Timour. At that early period, Marco Polo mentions that at Masulipatam "are made the most beautiful and valuable cotton cloths in the world; also the thinnest and most delicate, resembling our spiders' webs." He gives the same praise to the cotton manufactures of Malabar, which, with other goods of value, were exported to China, as well as to Egypt. He describes also an immense quantity of dressed leather as being sent to Arabia and the adjoining regions; including coverlets of red leather representing birds and beasts delicately interwoven with gold and silver thread, worth ten marks of silver, and cushions woven with gold of the same value—all "embroidered more delicately than in any other part of the world." At this time the traveller found the people of the peninsula, from the king downwards, entirely naked, with the exception of a cloth round the middle.

Before the time of Akbar, the Moguls in India were little more than an invading army in a hostile country, which, from that epoch, was shut up, by the force of external circumstances, in the arena of which it had taken possession, till it gradually dissolved into portions of the people. The only art, therefore, for which they

supplied recruits in any considerable numbers was the art of war, and the only encouragement they could have given to the trades of peace was by stimulating production. Mill labours hard to show the superiority of the Mussulmans in everything relating to civilization; but we confess ourselves unable to draw such deductions from the historical facts we have collected. The deterioration of the Hindoos under the Mahomedan sway is susceptible of proof, but we look in vain for those evidences of progression which might naturally be expected from their amalgamation with a more civilized people. They are celebrated now for the very same mechanical arts for which they were celebrated long before the invasion of Timour; and there are remains of roads in various parts of the country which, belonging incontestibly to the time of the Hindoo princes, would seem to indicate that even in those great works of civilization the conquerors merely followed the practice of the conquered. We learn from the Greeks that there were distinct classes of officers for the inspection of agricultural employments, for the construction and preservation of tanks, and for the examination of weights and measures in the public market. We would further observe, that in this interesting question the usual effects of time and the collision of races upon social progress are completely forgotten. If the Hindoos, instead of retrograding, had merely remained stationary, it would have been sufficient to prove that they were injured rather than improved by their Mahomedan masters. When we find, however, a highly ingenious and imitative people, as we shall see they proved themselves afterwards to be, remaining under the sway of another race for some centuries, without exhibiting any sensible progress

except in one or two of the fine arts, we are led to conclude that there was something, either in the position or character of their masters, which prevented the usual results that follow the contact and mingling of the different families of mankind.

What this was may be inferred with tolerable certainty even from the meagre outline of history we have given. The Mahomedan invaders of India were a series of military hordes who eventually retained possession of the country, as they had won it, by the sword. Up to the time of Baber, the princes may be considered as little better than foreign robbers, whose sole object was the acquisition of wealth, and the slaughter of its heathen owners. The whole treasure of the country thus went into the hands of a few of the more powerful officers; but this giving rise to disturbances dangerous to the imperial power, Allah-u-din restored for a moment the universal level of despotism by seizing upon the estates of Mussulmans and Hindoos alike, and reducing even the collectors of the revenue to the same state of poverty and dependence as the ryots. This prince, finding it necessary to lower the pay of his army by one-half, commanded that an equivalent reduction should be made by his subjects in the price of horses, arms, and provisions! But under succeeding rulers a reaction gradually took place; the great officers of the empire raised their heads anew; provinces became independent states; and the people were doubly pillaged for the means of carrying on war simultaneously against their neighbours and the throne of Delhi. The life of Baber was a series of battles, but he succeeded in building up the empire anew. Another dismemberment took place under his successor; but again, under Akbar, the sceptre of the Moguls was

extended over all India. From his death to that of Aurungzebe, all was confusion, bloodshed, and horror,—gilded ever and anon by gleams of barbaric magnificence, which only rendered the despair of the people more evident; and then came the rise of the Mahrattas, the invasion of the Persians, the swift decay, the rending in pieces, and utter extinction of the Mogul empire.

It is not to be expected that the arts of peace could have been improved under such a regime; for even if the people enjoyed an occasional breathing-time from war, the gripe of oppression was never relaxed for a moment. In the march of the imperial army through the country, the inhabitants were accustomed to fly from before it, and take refuge in the jungles, and among the fastnesses of the mountains; and if surprised in their towns and villages, they frequently destroyed their wives and children to prevent their contamination. But even in profound peace, the system of plunder to which they were subjected went on as usual; no capital could be accumulated by mechanical industry; and if, by some extraordinary fortune, the artizan amassed more money than was requisite for the bare support of his family, instead of laying it out in experiments and improvements, he buried it in the earth.

It might be supposed that the luxury of the conquerors would have produced some advancement at least in the fine arts, such as architecture, sculpture, and painting; but although some elegant edifices attest the good taste of one or two of the emperors, and the teachability of the Hindoo workmen, this had little effect upon the national genius. The arts in India were mysteries, confined originally to the low castes which followed them, and ultimately lost even by them in the loss of Sanscrit

learning. The volumes which contained their theories became sealed books to the people, from their ignorance of the language, and afterwards to the Pundits, who attempted to translate them, from their ignorance of technical words, and from the oracular darkness of the terms employed. Thus only the practical part of the arts descended, by uncertain tradition, from generation to generation.

CHAPTER III.

RELIGION.—CASTE.

All Pagan religions appear to consist of an esoteric and exoteric doctrine; the former containing usually such simple yet sublime truths as may be arrived at by the human mind without the aid of revelation; and the latter dealing with the myths and symbols under which these truths have been hinted to the neophyte, or hidden from the vulgar. It is not surprising that the connection between the two should, in process of time, become so difficult to trace as at length to remain altogether a matter of dispute; for when untaught men once venture into the mystic and miraculous, their reason and imagination very soon part company. In point of fact, however, there is no distinction in the credibility of miracles. A thing is either in or out of the order of nature. The tears shed by a marble statue of the Virgin are as miraculous as the change of a nymph into a fountain, and that is as miraculous as the most absurd and fantastic transformation of the Hindoo deities: the one fiction has quite as little to do with religion (which is truth) as the other. All that can be said of the popular mythology of the Indians is, that it is a tissue of

wild and meaningless absurdities, heaped together from time to time without even an attempt at system; while that of the Greeks and Romans received a certain degree of arrangement from the poets, if, indeed, it was not actually invented by them, in an age when poetry had already submitted to the rules of art. The fantastic religion of Ovid, however, though possessing some coherency as well as elegance, had, in all probability,—notwithstanding the desperate ingenuity of the learned,—as little connection with the truths of nature as the nightmare fancies of the brahmins.

The brahminical system is a sort of spiritual pantheism. God is a divine essence, existing eternally throughout measureless space. All spirit is a portion of this spirit, including the souls of men; and all will be reunited at last in a state of perfect beatitude. The world is a place of trial and purification. The soul of the brahmin is nearest to heaven, but if it falls short in virtue, after the death of the body, it is cast into purgatory, whence, after a certain term of imprisonment, it returns to its union with material existence; and after passing, in the course of many lives, through various stages of creation, it at length reascends to its last state of brahminism, and is ultimately absorbed into the divine essence. This state of absorption—this oneness with the deity—is the aim of all intelligent beings. By means of intense contemplation the soul may at once enjoy a foretaste of heaven, and become more fit to be received into immortal bliss.

Under this system, it will be remarked, the brahmins, as the order of souls nearest the heavenly essence, are entitled to unlimited respect; but at the same time there is a chain which runs through all creation and connects the lowest caste with the highest; for all classes are pressing forward to brahminism—all men hope to be

brahmins in a new stage of existence, however remote from the present. Thus the supremacy of the highest caste is not only divested of the idea of tyranny, but is reconciled even to the self-esteem of mankind. Farther; the chain comprehends not merely human beings, but the meanest insect,—the most hideous reptile,—for these may be animated by the souls of men in a state of probation; and thus, whatever vice or forgetfulness may have crept into the world, the system really inculcates a spirit of universal charity.

This sublime Essence being passive in itself, it was necessary to tell by what power creation arose, and was preserved, and passed through the different stages of destruction and reproduction. The original agents were said to be emanations from the all-pervading spirit: Brahma the creator, Vishnoo the preserver, and Siva the destroyer and reproducer; and with these finely imagined beings, personifying the attributes of the Almighty, commences, strictly speaking, the mythology of the Hindoos. Some men attached themselves more especially to one god, some to another, and the worshipper made no scruple of investing his own supernatural patron with attributes originally belonging to the others; till at length this predilection heating to religious zeal, rival sects arose who declared that *their* deity was the one supreme being.

It would be needless, in a work of this nature, to describe the different theories of the origin of the universe, for these were probably more numerous than has yet been suspected; and it would be still more needless to criticise, with Mill, the vagueness of their expressions and incoherency of their thoughts. It will be better to try to obtain from them a few general ideas. The eternity of matter appears to be a universal doctrine, as

indeed it is the only one reconcilable with mere human reason; but in the school of the Vedanta the material effect is mystically identified with its spiritual cause. Though the elements of matter, however, existed before the creation, they were, as in the Mosaic account, "without form and void," and slumbering in original darkness. The "soul of all beings," having dispelled the gloom, created first the deep; and *the spirit of God moved upon the waters.**

So far all is indistinctness and sublimity; and here would seem to end the work of the divine Essence, and to begin the fantastic labours of mythology. Disregarding these, however, we shall merely say, that the creative power—the first emanation from the eternal One—arose from the abyss in which it had slumbered for unimaginable ages, and framed the heavens and the earth, the powers of nature, the human soul, and the various inhabitants of the world.

There is nothing in this indicative of grovelling ideas, or even consistent with a very early stage of civilization; but it does not contain materials for an exoteric religion—even in Europe of the nineteenth century. The Creator, therefore, we are told, is the god Brahma, who was born from a seed or element of the divine essence, which expanded to a prodigious egg as bright as gold; and after liberating himself by causing his prison to divide, he formed the heavens and the earth of its two divisions. Brahma, Vishnoo, and Siva are all represented as having consorts, like the gods of Greece; and from their union with these they were themselves born in sundry incarna-

* The waters are called *nara*, because they were the production of Nara, or *the spirit of God;* and since they were his first *ayana*, or *place of motion*, he thence is named NARAYANA, or *moving on the waters*. Inst. of Menu, ch. i.

tions, or descents upon the earth, called avatars, when the state of the world required their interference. Here, then, opens a limitless field for the religious romancers, and here Mythology loses even the faint and mystic vision it has hitherto preserved of Philosophy.

To describe the avatars would be useless, to criticise them absurd. To the cold imagination of Europe, they are the wildest and most extravagant of all conceivable fictions; but being consonant with the genius of the people who invented them, they are implicitly believed by the vulgar. It is evident from internal testimony that they belong to different epochs, and are the production of different minds; some presenting specimens of the lowest degree of rude and barbarous taste, and some a voluptuous refinement which has rarely been equalled and never excelled. Of the latter is the story of the incarnation of Vishnoo in the person of Krishna; a fine poem which is only indelicate to unbelief. A Hindoo would smile on being told that the warm descriptions in the Song of Solomon are merely a religious allegory, personifying the Almighty and his Church; and a Christian shudders to hear the lovely shepherdess of the Yamuna declaring that the burning desires inspired by the wanton Heri could not be otherwise than virtuous, since they were felt only for the Lord of Life. This incarnation, it needs hardly be added, is worshipped with devoted zeal by the Indian women; while other portions of the people find in the rest of the avatars types of less excusable passions.

But in the present state of our knowledge it is not possible to give any intelligible account of the Hindoo religion; and a mere detail of the aimless and senseless superstitions of the people, besides being out of place here, would be neither amusing nor instructive. Some

writers think with Raynal, that in such discussions we seem to wander among heaps of ruins—the remains of an immense fabric, the original form of which is for ever lost; but whether these debris possessed in reality, at any time, a regular plan or not is very doubtful, and is at any rate of little consequence except to the speculations of the learned. Much ingenuity has been thrown away in resolving the Indian deities into the sun and stars, and as much in defending their right to be considered independent abstractions; the main cause of which waste of intellect seems to us to be the wrong-headedness of theorists, which obstinately refuses to borrow any light from the theories of others. Dupuis, in the "Origine de tous les Cultes," asserts, that almost the entire world was and is Sabæan, and maps minutely the progress of this religion from the Mediterranean to the Sea of Japan. What then was the religion of the world before? Sabæanism was originally nothing more than the worship of the heavenly bodies; and is it reasonable to suppose that proselytism was necessary to teach rude nations to choose for the objects of their devotion those resplendent orbs which give warmth and light to the earth and its denizens, — which control the seasons and the tides, and regulate the growth of plants, and the production of the food of man? But although this may have been—we may almost say must have been—the earliest religion, we can see no necessity for identifying the later personages of mythology with the stars. The human mind must have made some considerable progress before being able to conceive the idea of the creation of the world we have described; and it is not unlikely that men had even attained to the conception of a Creator, of whom the gods of their fathers were merely the creatures. Still there can be no doubt that the popular belief was used to some

extent as materials for the philosophical system, and thus a resemblance may exist without an identity.

Natural religion, in fact, would seem to be capable of division, without taxing the imagination much, into three eras :—First, when the heavenly bodies are the visible deities of mankind ; second, when schools arise in which philosophical ideas are intermixed with, or superadded to, the rude belief of the vulgar ; third, when the priests, in order to enlist the imaginations of men in their service without making public their real or supposed knowledge, hide their dogmas under myths and symbols. "The thunder of Jupiter," says Strabo, "the ægis of Minerva, the trident of Neptune, the torches and snakes of the furies, the spears of the gods adorned with ivy, and the whole ancient theology, are all fables which the legislators who formed the political constitution of states employed as bugbears to overawe the credulous and simple." The motives for the concealment we have alluded to, which have influenced the early priesthood in all countries, received additional strength in India from the habits of the people. Everything there was a mystery. Even the books of the arts, as we have seen, were written in a learned language, and in terms of such studied obscurity, that the knowledge they contained is already lost among the other wrecks of time.

The periods at which India passed through these changes will perhaps for ever remain unknown ; but of late great discredit has been thrown upon the antiquity of the sacred records of the incarnations, which the Hindoos believe to have been dictated by inspiration many thousand years before the events. Some of these poems refer to personages who really lived ten or eleven centuries before Christ ; but Krishna is now supposed to be either an imaginary being, or to have been born at the

close of the sixth century of our era. All we know with certainty, but which bears with some weight upon the question, is, that the Greeks, who were likely to be very curious in such matters, brought back to Europe much fuller accounts of the philosophy than of the mythology of the Hindoos.

It is difficult to estimate the effect of such a system of religion upon the moral character of the people; for although it certainly contains a few general principles, these are swallowed up by the comparatively modern absurdities and contradictions of the avatars. In the Gospel of Christ (viewing it for the occasion as an uninspired production), whatever room there may be for doctrinal controversy, there can be no mistake as to the system of morals, which is clear and simple to the most stolid apprehension. But this religion arose when the Jewish law was already falling in pieces from its own cumbrousness and the assaults of dissenters, and when an enlightened philosophy had thrown discredit and even contempt upon the heathen mythology. India was in no such state of preparation when the ninth and as yet the last incarnation appeared in the person of Buddha, about a thousand years before Christ.* Buddha presented himself as a reformer of Brahminism, a simplifier of its moral doctrines; but the sect was rigorously persecuted, and compelled to carry its heterodoxy to other countries, there to sink gradually into still grosser idolatry than that from which it had emerged. It is said, we are aware, both by Hindoo and European writers that the mythology was merely a complicated allegory—just as the later Platonists extracted the sublimest truths of

* This date may be thought a gratuitous assumption, since speculators differ so widely, but it has not been fixed upon without collating the opinions of the learned.

nature from the fables of the Greeks; but this, whether correct or otherwise, has nothing to do with the question. The people knew nothing, and were taught nothing, of the esoteric doctrine, if any existed, but continued to extract a warrant for bad as well as for good actions from the example of their deities.

The doctrine of the identity of the human soul with the Divine Essence, conjoined with that of the distinction of classes, was the grand vantage ground of the Brahmins. *They* were but a step from the Deity himself, and were therefore objects of reverence, almost amounting to worship, with the people. Even the law had no power over their lives, whatever crime they might commit. Brahminism, indeed, was the very portal of heaven, since, in the progression of souls through the different stages of the metempsychosis, they were under the necessity of arriving at that highest rank in creation before they could obtain absorption. An exception, it is true, was made in favour of those persons of lower caste who consented to make their exeunt from the world at such places as the Brahmins desired; and thus the holy city of Benares is to this day crowded by wealthy men, who proceed thither from all parts of India to die, in the sure and certain hope that they will thus be saved from further transmigrations, and be reunited at once to the Deity.

In estimating the morality of the Hindoo religion, we meet with the same difficulties, and commit the same errors, as in exploring its mythology. Some authors, directing their attention solely to those institutes of Menu which inculcate forgiveness of injuries, truth, charity, self-control, and purity of mind and body, describe it as an admirable system of natural ethics; while others, collecting into one mass the dogmas of successive sects and unnumbered ages, pronounce it to be a tissue of

absurdities and abominations. It is as though we were to jumble together the ceremonial observances of Moses, the severe simplicity of the primitive church, the Jewism of the Ebionites, the philosophy of the Gnostics, and the ludicrous or horrible extravagances of a hundred succeeding sects, by whom robbery, lust, and murder were consecrated to religion, and then declare Christianity as a whole to be contradictory, immoral, and profane. But the misfortune is, that while exposing error we have no means of eliciting truth. Our view is lost in "the dark rereward and abysm of time," and it is impossible to form a congruous whole out of the shadows and phantoms that move across it. The popular religion of the Hindoos, in fact, is no more a system than are the manifold superstitions of the common people of Europe.

Amidst the darkness which envelopes this inquiry, one thing is clear, that in early Brahminism is to be found, if properly sifted, not only a ceremonial as apparently trivial and aimless as that of the Mosaical dispensation, but a morality more pure—almost as pure as that of Christianity itself. The early Jews were not taught by their legislator to return good for evil—to bless their enemies even in the moment of their own destruction, "as the sandal tree in the instant of its overthrow sheds perfume on the axe that fells it!" The very difference between the refined morality of the teaching, and the vice and absurdity contained in the mythic legends, shows that both cannot belong to the same system. It should not be forgotten, however, that the gods of the Hindoos, of whom so many extravagant romances are related, are all inferior to the One eternal Being. They are not immortals like the equally immoral deities of Greece and Rome, but emanations of a mixed nature, whose task is definite, and whose separate existence ends with its fulfilment. They re-

semble, in fact, the Brahmins, some of whom, by the virtuous austerity of their lives, attained to such sanctity, or in other words, approached so nearly to the divine nature, that they were able to make the whole pantheon tremble. It is needless, however, to seek excuses for mythology, which differs in different ages and countries only in its adaptation to the character of the time and the people. A European imagination is shocked at the idea of men believing in the monstrous impossibilities of the incarnations; while a Hindoo is amazed to find the ancient gods of Europe so little more than men. Both systems of mythology are equally impossible, and the one faith, viewed with reference to the genius of the people, is not more absurd than the other.

But the principal cause of the injustice done to the Hindoos even by philosophical inquirers is the inapplicability of the moral scale by which they are estimated. India has not been civilized like Europe by the collision of races and tribes in different stages of refinement. Its population was too vast, its area too immense, for revolution. The accessions it received became absorbed and acclimatised, and left the original form of society peculiar and unbroken. At this moment the country resembles, in many respects, Europe in the middle ages, and in still more respects, the ancient world before the introduction of Christianity.

The confounding, in the laws and habits of the people, of great crimes with trivial inadvertences is not so peculiar to the Hindoos as some authors seem to imagine. In the book of Leviticus, taking an oath to do evil is placed on the same footing of criminality as touching an animal of that particular conformation which, for no reason that is intelligible in our day, was called "unclean." A woman was unclean twice longer after the

birth of a female than of a male child. Sowing the field with mingled seed, and wearing a mixture of linen and woollen were included among grave offences against virtue. If an amour took place between a Jew and a bondwoman, even when the latter was betrothed to another, the parties escaped with a flogging inflicted on the female, and the fine of a ram exacted from the male for a trespass offering; but if the same offence was committed by any parties, whether bond or free, while the woman had her periodical ailment, it was punished with the death of both. A priest with any corporeal blemish, such as a flat nose, was not permitted to go in unto the veil or come nigh the sanctuary. Such matters in the Jewish law would not be more easily explicable than the catalogue of what are called Hindoo absurdities, if the latter had the advantage of the ingenuity and research which have been devoted to the former.

The Mosaic account of the creation was treated with as much derision by the Gnostics, at one time the most learned of the Christian world, as ever the cosmogony of the Brahmins provoked; and Origen and St. Augustine looked upon it as in great part an allegory, which it was impossible to believe in its literal sense. We have no desire to repeat the impieties which have been uttered upon this subject, and which have not been altogether avoided even by Dr. Burnet in the Archæologia. But the early Christians by no means wanted faith in the miraculous and the absurd; for they were firm believers in all the trumpery of the heathen gods, who, according to them, were those fallen angels who, having lost heaven were permitted to wander to and fro upon the earth. This fact, according to Tertullian, was confessed by the demons themselves when exorcised by the Christian priests.

The horrible penances and religious suicides practised in India are said to be discountenanced or forbidden by the more ancient books; but when Wilson, in his valuable notes on Mill, goes the length of saying, with reference to the immolation under the car of Juggernaut, that the shrine probably attained reputation as a place of pilgrimage no longer ago than a century, we may fairly suspect him of partizanship, though on the more generous side. Nearly one hundred and forty years ago, Hamilton found this idol resorted to by vast crowds of pilgrims from all parts of India, and when its effigy was carried abroad, "old zealots" were seen falling "flat on the ground to have the honour to be crushed to pieces by the coach wheels." In his time the tradition was that Juggernaut had come from over the sea several thousand years before. But it will be more for our present purpose to remark that the fanatical zeal of the Hindoos was far outstripped by that of the Christian Donatists of the fourth century. These sectarians burst into the temples and the halls of justice of the Pagans for the pleasure of being put to death; they attacked travellers on the highway to compel them to grant them the honour of martyrdom; and sometimes they treated the public to the spectacle of their removal to heaven, by flinging themselves over a precipice in the midst of an invited concourse of spectators. The Hindoo custom of saints surfeiting themselves to death, reclining on iron spikes, suspending themselves by hooks in the flesh, roasting themselves in the midst of four fires, and submitting to various other horrid tortures, may be very easily paralleled by the austerities of the primitive monks. These zealots weighed themselves to the earth with chains; some of both sexes exposed themselves stark naked and permanently to the inclemencies of the seasons; some made

a merit of living for many days without food, and for many nights without sleep; some domiciled themselves in the depths of a cavern or the lair of a wild beast; and some went out habitually with the cattle to graze in the fields. Among these worthies may be mentioned the famous Syrian, Simeon Stylites, who chained himself for life on a mountain within a circle of stones, which he gradually raised to a column sixty feet high, from which he never descended alive, although he lived for thirty years.

While showing, however, that the Hindoos have not only been equalled but surpassed by the Christians in fanaticism, it is necessary to notice the curious circumstance that the doctrines of the immortality of the soul and future rewards and punishments, which were only hinted at by the Jewish prophets, and were altogether omitted by Moses, form a prominent part of the Brahminical faith. The ideas of the Platonic school, it may also be observed, touching the eternity of the human soul and its identity with the Divine Essence, are extremely similar to those we have described in the early part of this chapter. But it must be confessed that the spirit of toleration which pervades Brahminism is its strongest redeeming point, and that, while contemplating this characteristic of a Pagan faith, we are struck with more horror than ever by the abominable exultation of Tertullian, as he gloats in imagination upon the eternal tortures of the great and learned of the unbelieving world.

The indecencies which deform most Pagan religions are found, to a certain extent, in Brahminism, but not, as the learned assure us, in its more ancient or esoteric part. The form of the Lingam is said to suggest no impure ideas; and the dancing girls and immodest representations are chiefly confined to the temples of the

south. The practical proof given of this assertion is, the general propriety of conduct of the Hindoo women, who are asserted by authors of credit to be most exemplary in point of chastity. However this may be, Europeans are not good judges of the question; for the abject poverty of the lower classes of natives would be likely to make their women fall an easy prey, even if the seducer were not surrounded with all the prestiges of conquest and authority.

It is usual to consider the system of caste as a mere political institution, similar to the classification of the people which takes place in other rude countries, when they emerge from the condition in which the wants of the individual are supplied by himself. Even in India, this, no doubt, was its origin; but at a period far beyond the ken of the present age it was so completely identified with religion that it is impossible to separate them. The Hindoo superstition is, in fact, based upon caste, and one cannot exist without the other. Caste resembles a cement which holds together the entire frame-work of Indian society, with all its usages and opinions; and it is a prodigious mistake to endeavour to indoctrinate the people with new dogmas before providing for the dissolution of the bond which unites their ancestral faith with their social duties, pleasures, and sympathies. When conversion takes place among masses of the natives, it is neither by means of reasoning nor miracle, but simply by providing them with a place in society in lieu of the one they forfeit. When the converts of the Christian schools return to their families, they, as a thing of course, fall back into idolatry, in order to avoid loss of caste, which is equivalent to a sentence of excommunication in earlier Europe; but when bodies of workmen are received into employments where their associates through life must be

their fellow-workmen, they grow up with little difficulty into Christian communities.

It is to be observed of the system of caste, that we no sooner hear of its existence than its *instability* is declared to us. During the period of its integrity we are told that there were no kings and no laws,—man lived, in short, in a primeval paradise; but by-and-by there came into the world lust and other evil passions,—the classes of the people were intermingled in impious debauchery, and a new generation produced which had no place in the social system instituted by Brahma.

This original system does not appear to have been very unjust or unequal as regards the people in contradistinction to the serfs or helots. The duty of the Brahmin was instruction and the performance of religious ceremonies as a means of subsistence; but in case of need he was permitted to have recourse to the employments of the two classes below his own, although with heavy and apparently aimless restrictions. The duty of the Chsatrya was to fight for the community as a means of subsistence, and he was permitted, like the Brahmin, to learn the sciences and perform certain religious ceremonies, and, in case of need, to have recourse to the employments of the class below his own. The duty of the Vaisya was traffic and agriculture as a means of subsistence, and he enjoyed the same privileges as the Chsatrya.

The first, or priestly body—or rather the body from which the priests might be taken—were sacred. They enjoyed numerous privileges, such as the exemption from capital punishment; but on the other hand were excluded from the government and fettered by restrictions in the acquisition of wealth. The soldiers who lived on their pay might aspire to the throne, but could not

expound the scriptures or teach; while the third class might enrich themselves by traffic and agriculture, but were excluded from the employments peculiar to the two former. As for the fourth class, the Sudras, they were somewhat in the position of the European serfs of the middle ages, but better protected by the laws. All these distinctions were kept up by a very extraordinary code, which awarded punishment to crimes, not in proportion to their abstract enormity, but to the dignity of the class upon which they were committed. But this dignity, it must be recollected, was not merely established by the laws, it was a portion of the religion; and thus the most trivial assault was at the same moment a social offence and an impiety.

We thus see that, at the time caste is said to have flourished in all its integrity, the whole nation was divided into teachers, soldiers, merchants, husbandmen, and bondmen. There is not a word of the mechanical arts, without which no society, except in a very early stage of rudeness, could exist; and the idea is forced upon us that the whole account, so far, is a philosophical invention of the lawgivers of the Hindoos. The true system of caste, as it continues to exist to this day, begins with the end of its imaginary stability; and the *barrun sunker* (said to have been produced by the profane intermingling of all the four classes), were probably nothing more than the great body of the serfs which had become formidable from numbers, or troublesome from intelligence. The barrun sunker was declared to belong to the servile caste, just as in Europe the offspring of a free and bond person was declared to be born a serf; and the servile classes were secured by law in the trades to which they had previously attached themselves, and enjoined to consider them hereditary in their tribes and families. The idea

that at any particular time a variety of new professions, such as those of goldsmiths, druggists, and dancers, were suddenly assigned to masses of the people that had previously been slaves or servants, we take leave, notwithstanding the authority of the pundits translated by Halhed, to pronounce an absurdity.

There can be no doubt, however, of the great antiquity of the institution; neither do we think it possible to read calmly the preface to the Code of Gentoo Laws, without coming to the conclusion that it was adopted as a mode of settling the country either after conquest, or after an unsuccessful insurrection of the people against the government. Whether it ever answered the purpose even of tranquillization may be doubted. It disunited the people. It left no room for generous ambition. It perpetuated, in its small circles, observances and prejudices that would have been lost in the masses of an undivided nation. It chained its victims down to the social position in which it found them. It substituted *esprit du corps* for public spirit, rendered those submissive who were not cowards, and gave success to invasion after invasion, the body of the people being perfectly satisfied under any yoke if they were only permitted to supply as usual their humble wants, to retain their childish superstitions, and to practise the idle ceremonies which were the prescribed duty of their lives.

Caste has been looked upon by some late writers as little more than a bugbear. "Its rules," say they, "have never received implicit attention; there have been Brahmin kings and Sudra kings; and vast masses of the servile class to whom arms are forbidden have traversed the country with fire and sword." All this is true, but has little to do with the question. When men move in bodies for any purpose however criminal, they are not

punished by society as individuals. The insurrection, for instance, of a province or a village leaves the people in the same relative position as before with regard to their families and friends; but the case is totally different when individuals transgress the laws of the small communities to which they belong,—the society in which they live, move, and have their being. In India to lose caste is to lose everything that makes life desirable to the gregarious habits of man; and the victim has no resource, no compensation. He cannot fall from his own into a lower circle, for the lower you descend you find exclusiveness increase in force rather than diminish. It is mistaken pity we bestow upon those tribes which are objects of horror to others, for the principle of repugnance is as strong on the one side as on the other. All conform alike to the law under which they were born; and the shoemaker, whose tribe is one of the last of the original barrun sunker, no more thinks of complaining that he is not of the tribe of druggists, one of the first, than the peasant thinks of blaming his destiny for not having made him a prince.

The public life led by the natives of India is one great cause of the perpetuation of the prejudices of caste. Except in the great towns (which contain a very trifling proportion of the population of the country) they cannot be said to have a home. They have no retiring place for the growth of private feelings, and the formation of individual character; but pass their entire lives, with the exception of the few hours of the night devoted to sleep, in the open air, surrounded by their friends and associates. They are thus unconscious spies upon each other, —links of that chain of caste by which they are themselves bound. The consequence of this publicity is that external appearance is all in all; and, as the ceremonial

of meals recurs the most constantly, that man who is seen to pay the strictest attention to his eating is reputed the most orthodox. In point of fact, this is the grand distinction between the high and low castes.

Even the lowest castes resemble clubs, governed by their own by-laws, and controlled by fines as well as the fear of expulsion. In some cases this is advantageous, as they are never slow in punishing improprieties, the sum in which the offender is mulcted being spent in an entertainment to the tribe; but in others the general community suffers from the facility with which such bodies of men may create the abuses of monopoly. The great injury, however, which the system does to society is by its tendency to perpetuate prejudices, and arrest the progress of civilization.

The influence of the Mahomedan conquest upon the religion and the castes of India was, for reasons we have already hinted at, comparatively trifling. Compulsory conversion was sometimes resorted to; but the impression made in this way on a great country by a comparatively small number of strangers could neither be extensive nor lasting. The contending sects, too, by which Islamism was torn to pieces, were a great hindrance to the work; and of these there are now seventy-two which, in their contentions with each other, appear to have lost all spirit of proselytism. In fact, it is the complaint of Mahomedan writers that the disciples of the prophet, instead of converting infidels, fall in great numbers into idolatry themselves. There are times of the year, it is true, when the Hindoos and Mahomedans come to blows as their processions meet; but in these instances religion, in all probability, is rather the occasion than the cause of the strife. The Hindoo has neither hatred nor contempt for any faith whatever. He venerates both Christ and

Mahomed, and implicitly believes in their miracles; although, of course, giving the preference to those of his own deities as the *most* miraculous of the three. Healing the sick and raising the dead are worthy of his respect; but hurling whole mountains and cities through the air are performances indeed worthy of a god. The mythological heroes of other Pagan nations are merely extraordinary men, or at most wizards and enchanters; while those of the Hindoos are, even in form as well as nature, entirely abstracted from the human analogies which elsewhere govern even the wildest imagination. We shall see in another chapter, as the history flows on, what effect Christianity has had, or is likely to have, on this extraordinary capacity of belief; but, in the mean time, at the close of the Mahomedan dominion, we find no vestiges even of that apocryphal purity ascribed to the early religion of Brahma.

CHAPTER IV.

GOVERNMENT.—LAW.—LITERATURE.

THE grand difficulty in this investigation is, that we cannot "begin at the beginning." We cannot trace the institutions of the Hindoos from their rude commencement, and watch their ripening, and anon their decay, under the influence of circumstances which have elsewhere governed the fortunes of nations. At some remote era, hidden from our view by an impenetrable veil of centuries, India was a great and populous country, in a higher state of civilization than the rest of the world at a much later period. This is all we know. However far back we may go, we find a regular government, established laws, and a national literature; but the circumstances which gave their form and colour to these must for ever remain hidden among the mysteries of time.

The best authors have confounded the legislative with the executive functions of royalty, and have supposed that those kings of whom we catch a distant glimpse

among the shadows of the past, were themselves the origin of the laws they appeared to administer with all the customary despotism of the East. But the mystery lies much deeper. Princes and people were bound with one common chain, and both alike were the agents of what seemed to be an inscrutable destiny. The government was constructed neither by the crown nor for the crown. Men lived under an antique dispensation, which they revered as the will of God; and the hungry Pariah, unlike the European outcast of crime or fortune, held as definite and peculiar a rank in the social scale as the priestly Brahmin.

The great singularity of this institution is, that in so early a period of the world it should be contrived for the benefit, not of the framers, but of all classes, and that the thought on which it was based should be the gradation, not only of ranks, but of duties,—not only of deprivations, but of compensations. The highest class in point of honour, as we have already seen, were shut out from the throne, and condemned to pass a great part of their lives in poverty and asceticism; those who were permitted to be kings could not aspire to be Brahmins, and were charged with the military defence of the country; the people, who cultivated the fields and exchanged the articles of merchandize, pursued their labour in peace, excluded alike from the honours, the dangers, and the deprivations of those above them; and the servile class (a universal element in early eastern societies), while the hewers of wood and drawers of water, and manufacturers of utensils and ornaments for the rest of the community, were compensated for what were supposed to be their humble labours by a corresponding share in the protection of the laws.

The executive government of a people thus classified

was in the hands of a king, assisted by a privy council and numerous ministers, presided over by a Brahmin distinguished for learning. Each province was under the rule of a viceroy, depending on the sovereign, who, in turn, had governors under him, and they deputy governors, and so on according to the extent of the territory; while the whole was kept in order by a portion of the standing army. Each town had a magistrate; and every ten, twenty, hundred, and thousand towns a greater and a greater, till the ascending scale reached the viceroy of the province; and all these governors were under the jurisdiction of those immediately above them, so that the whole system terminated in an apex formed by the sovereign. The taxes, in like manner, after defraying the expenses of the various vicegerencies, found their way, from one hand to another, to the royal treasury. Theoretically, this was despotic power lodged in the hands of an individual; but, practically, it was controlled by various influences. The law was above the prince, and he was commanded by Menu not to interpret it without the advice of his council. Sometimes a prince who endeavoured to escape from the destiny which surrounded him was deposed by the Brahmins; and always he was held in check, as in other countries, by his own viceroys, who, at an early period, became an hereditary nobility. To keep in order a machinery which was not in direct communication with the supreme government, a supervising authority was vested in one of the ministers, who placed a confidential functionary in each great town or city, whose duty it was to survey the whole district, and report on the conduct of the governors. The entire structure appears to be more simple than rude, and to exhibit little trace of a very backward state of civilization. Some writers, indeed, do not scruple to praise its organi-

zation as regards practical results; but in the laws of Menu an almost general stigma is passed upon the district officers, which hardly accords with this opinion. What may be said for it, however, with justice is, that it is superior to the system which has prevailed in almost all other eastern countries. We may here observe, that even the stigma referred to affords a curious proof of the antiquity of this form of government in India. Even the laws of Menu themselves, it seems, were modern—the system had already fallen into decay, and new remedies were necessary to restore its efficiency.

In the code of Gentoo laws, the sovereign is commanded to keep in subjection to himself "his lust, anger, avarice, folly, drunkenness, and pride," and warned against too great addiction to gaming or the pleasures of the chase, and to indolence or frivolous amusements. He is required to respect the Brahmins, and nourish the ryots of his kingdom, and in every respect whatever to act conformably to the Shaster. He must esteem his subjects in the light of his own children; he must dig wells, and keep open the high roads; he must be careful to suppress theft and robbery, and, when unable to prevent these crimes, he must make good to the loser the plundered property; he must not be impatient or angry at hearing the complaints of his subjects, nor must he punish those who are tempted to revile him by exasperation at having lost their cause; he must accept of no presents contrary to the Shaster; and he must use his best efforts in putting down profligacy of all kinds. United with these rules are many that are entirely unintelligible in our form of civilization, and many that to Europeans of the present day appear trifling or absurd; of the latter are those relating to the keeping of magicians as well as physicians and surgeons, and to the

entertainment of buffoons, parasites, jesters, dancing girls, and athletæ: but we ought to remember that we have not advanced very far beyond such toys even in the western hemisphere.

The military defence of the country was the grand duty of government, and the maxims of Menu on that point, as well as the magnitude of the standing army, appear to point to a period when the tribes living under this dispensation were surrounded by hostile neighbours. The institution of the Chsatrya caste, however, has led Mill and other writers into the unwarrantable conclusion that a fourth part of the people were soldiers. It is impossible for us to know anything with certainty on this question; but it is quite unreasonable to suppose that the noble class were equal in point of numbers to the ignoble. The agriculturists, traffickers, artisans, and servants formed no doubt, as elsewhere, the great body of the people; and this was the more likely to be the case in India, where servile employments are divided among various tribes to such an extent that in domestic establishments it requires half a dozen men to do the work of one. Still the standing army was numerous in proportion to the people. In time of peace it was distributed throughout the provinces under the command of the governors, and in time of war reassembled round the standard of the king. This bears a certain resemblance to the feudal system of Europe, and there is no occasion to shrink from indulging the idea. Feudality does not belong to one quarter of the world, but to mankind in a certain stage of social progress; although it must always be modified by circumstances peculiar to the country in which it exists. Feudal India, for instance, is described by Colonel Tod as identical in all matters of love, chivalry, and magnificence, with feudal France; but a closer

examination soon dissipates the illusion. To form any conception of the condition of the former country from analogies drawn from the latter in the middle ages, we must borrow largely from the imagination. We must suppose a European priesthood, divided into monks and friars, ascetics and recluses, but without that grand distinction which revolutionized the world, a hierarchy. We must suppose a nobility followed to the wars, not by a rabble swept indiscriminately from their estates, and fighting with staves and mallets, but exclusively by men born in the military rank, and claiming equality in descent with their leaders. We must suppose a free, not a servile peasantry, paying a tax for their fields which connected them with the interest and policy of government, and purchasing military protection from their superiors in rank. Finally, we must suppose a villeinage, in subjection to the other classes, but with guaranteed rights and prescribed employments which it would have been impious in them to abandon, or in others to disturb.

Such was India in theory, but the system does not appear to have worked well. The espionage introduced by the laws of Menu had no effect in securing the fidelity of the provincial governors; and the hereditary soldiers, however valiant, do not seem to have brought the military art to any degree of perfection. The special attachments and general insubordination of feudality exhibited themselves in the army; kings, viceroys, governors, chiefs, all set up for themselves; and at length, after various struggles with external enemies and internal dissensions, India became the prey of the Ghori Sultan, with his mingled army of Affghans, Persians, and Tartars. In the sequel, a considerable portion of the military class carried their valour, their arms, and their animosities to the fastnesses of the Aravulli and the oases of the Great

Desert to found there independent states which were precluded from union even by their geographical isolation, and which therefore formed no permanent barrier against future invasions.

The administration of the laws was presided over in the capital by the Hindoo king in person; but besides the royal court, there were three others of high authority, and fifteen inferior courts, "all having their several jurisdictions well defined, and many of them bearing a striking resemblance to the courts of the English common law."* In the institutions of Menu, the body of laws is divided thus: debt on loans for consumption, deposits and loans for use, sale without ownership, concerns among partners, subtraction of what has been given, nonpayment of wages or hire, nonperformance of agreements, rescision of sale and purchase, disputes between master and servant, combats on boundaries, assault and slander, larceny, robbery and other violence, adultery, altercation between man and wife and their several duties, inheritance, gaming with dice and with living creatures. This arrangement it will be seen, betrays an extreme rudeness in classification, inasmuch as civil and criminal affairs are intermingled; but Mill is incorrect in stating that nearly similar divisions are to be found in the compilation translated by Halhed. In that work civil offences come first; then criminal; then the offences of husband and wife, and other matters relating to women, which are a mixture of civil and criminal; and the last chapter is merely an appendix of miscellanea.

But we must not suffer ourselves to be betrayed into more than a glance at this extensive subject. The laws of the Hindoos were as sanguinary as those of most other ancient nations, and in many cases they were modified by

* Ellis.

circumstances hardly intelligible to us. The degree of criminality in offences, whether civil or criminal, was estimated according to the rank of the parties in the scale of caste; the notions peculiar to the east regarding cleanness and uncleanness imposed severe punishments upon what, in the west, would be reckoned only meaningless insults; and the physical purity of women was hedged round with the most terrific penalties, including mutilation for indiscretions affecting evidences of chastity that are not held to be at all indispensable by European knowledge. The institutes of Menu, it may be added, are the mere text of the laws, and are therefore incapable of being used in the Hindoo courts unaccompanied by commentaries.

The collection of the taxes is an important portion of the laws, and we are able to give in substance the whole of this department after Menu.

I. Of grain, an eighth, a sixth, or a twelfth part (according to the difference of soil and amount of labour) may be taken by the king. II. He may also take a sixth part of the produce of trees, of flesh meat, honey, clarified butter, perfumes, medical substances, liquids, flowers, roots, fruit, gathered leaves, pot herbs, grass, utensils made with leather or cane, earthen pots, and all things made of stone. But a military king who takes even a fourth part of the crops of his realm at a time of urgent necessity, as of war or invasion, and protects his people to the utmost of his power, commits no sin. III. Of cattle, of gems, of gold and silver, added each year to the capital stock, a fiftieth part may be taken by the king. IV. Having ascertained the rules of purchase and sale, the length of the way, the expenses of food and condiments, the charges of goods carried, and the net profits of trade, let the king oblige traders to pay taxes on their

saleable commodities; and, after full consideration, so levy those taxes continually in his dominions, that both he and the merchant may receive a just compensation for their several arts. The tax on the mercantile class, which in time of prosperity must be only a twelfth part of their crops, and a fifteenth of their personal profits, may be an eighth of their crops in a time of distress, or a sixth, which is the medium, or even a fourth in great public adversity; but a twentieth part of their grains or money and other moveables is the highest tax. V. Let the king order a mere trifle to be paid in the name of the annual tax by the meanest inhabitants of his realm, who subsists by petty traffic. VI. By low handicraftsmen, artificers, and servile men who support themselves by labour, the king may cause work to be done for a day in each month; but such persons at no time are to be called upon to pay taxes.

In Halhed's Code (a modern digest), the mercantile imposts are enormously increased. Goods bought and sold within the kingdom pay one-tenth part of the profit, and goods imported and sold at home one-twentieth part; with the exception of foreign flowers, roots, ginger, radishes, and the like; or honey, or grass, or fire-wood, on which one-sixth part is charged.

The great source of revenue, however, was the tax on the produce of the land, which is considered by many as a rent paid for its occupancy. The distinction, perhaps, involves but little practical difference; for it appears to be as certain that the true property of the land existed in the people, as that the true property of the tax existed in the sovereign. The Hindoos, it is to be presumed, were an immigrating people, since it is an understood principle in their law, that "the land belongs to him who clears it." In process of time, and probably at an early period,

the settlers, as we have described in a former chapter, may have been compelled to congregate in the political establishments called villages, and individuals may have merged their private rights of property in the community. However this may be, the right of the sovereign extended only to the tax. In making presents, so called, of land, he did not alienate the right of the people to divide their estates among their children, or even to sell them; he merely abandoned his own claim to the tax in favour of another. Theoretically the king was the owner of everything acquired by his subjects; but practically the latter had their rights as firmly secured as his own. Thus the duties of a prince were not imposed upon him by law under any penalty—it was merely suggested that a particular course of action would secure for him prosperity on earth and heaven hereafter; but in practice, if he did not conform to this advice, he was slain by his subjects, or deposed by the Brahmins.

It would be difficult on any other theory to understand the permanence of the village generations. "Dynasty after dynasty," says Sir Charles Metcalfe, "tumbles down; revolution succeeds to revolution; Hindoo, Patan, Mogul, Mahratta, Sik, English are all masters in turn; but the village community remains the same. In times of trouble they arm and fortify themselves; an hostile army passes through the country: the village communities collect their cattle within their walls, and let the enemy pass unprovoked. If plunder and devastation be directed against themselves, and the force employed be irresistible, they flee to friendly villages at a distance; but when the storm has passed over they return and resume their occupations. If a country remain for a series of years the scene of continued pillage and massacre, so that the villages cannot be inhabited, the

scattered villagers nevertheless return whenever the power of peaceable possession revives. A generation may pass away, but the succeeding generation will return. The sons will take the place of their fathers; the same site for the village,—the same positions for the houses,—the same lands will be re-occupied by the descendants of those who were driven out when the village was depopulated; and it is not a trifling matter that will drive them out, for they will often maintain their post through times of disturbance and convulsion, and acquire strength sufficient to resist pillage and oppression with success." These communities levied the state revenue, and were collectively responsible for the amount to the government. They administered justice in smaller offences, and in disputes in the first instance; and they let to new settlers such lands as had been vacated. In what light can they be viewed, if not as being, in a practical sense, the proprietors of the soil?

The government, the laws, the classification of the people, even the assignment of their trades and professions, may all be said to have been a portion of the religion of the Hindoos; but the national literature is connected with it in so special a manner that the one subject cannot be comprehended without reference to the other. Indian literature rests upon the basis of the sacred scripture; the heroes of mythology mingle with the heroes of history and romance; and the imagery even of profane poetry is consecrated by its origin, like sacrifices consumed by men after being offered to the gods. To try the genius of the Hindoos in their writings by the rules applicable to that of other nations would be vain. The whole form and framework of their compositions is different, depending upon the hidden and peculiar circumstances which formed the national character; while evi-

dent indications are found in the filling up, that this arises from no inferiority of mind, but that, on the contrary, they are as well acquainted with those principles of taste that are catholic in human nature, as the most refined and cultivated people.

The first thing that strikes an observer is the fact, that all the classical compositions of the Hindoos are in verse, whether treatises on philosophy, codes of laws, or romantic histories; and from this circumstance some writers reproach them with having been unable to get beyond that early stage of literature when men, not having begun to speculate, make use of poetry as the vehicle of the passions; while others account for the peculiarity by the structure of their language rendering metrical compositions less laborious than prose. But neither of these opinions seems satisfactory. The translated specimens of the literature we already possess afford a triumphant refutation of the one; while in the other it is forgotten that men adapt their speech to their genius, not their genius to their speech. Colebrooke traces this language to a primeval tongue, which became Sanscrit in India, Pelavi in Persia, and Greek on the shores of the Mediterranean; and there must be a reason why in one of these regions it retained so exclusively the metrical character.* We are ourselves inclined to look for a solution of the enigma in the peculiarity which endowed the whole literature with a religious character, and which

* The speculations of Colebrooke and Sir William Jones receive a curious illustration from an article in the thirteenth volume of the *Edinburgh Review*, in which a table is given of the analogies of Sanscrit with various other languages. For instance:—

Sanscrit.	*Latin.*	*Persian.*	*German.*	*English.*
pitara	pater	pider	vater	father
matara	mater	mader	mader	mother
bhratara	frater	brader	brader	brother

may therefore be supposed to have rendered the written language sacred and unchangeable; and this sacred character of the language receives confirmation from the circumstance of Sanscrit being confined in the dramatic poems to gods, and holy or other distinguished men, the women expressing themselves in Pracrit, and the lower classes in the vulgar tongues of the provinces.

The ancient Brahmins appear to have lived in retirement, wrapped up, perhaps, in spiritual and literary pride, but, at any rate, devoted to speculative studies, and abstracted from the turmoil of the world. Their productions afford unquestionable evidence of this character, and enable us to account for the fact that history has no place in the wide range of Hindoo literature. Even in the western world, men are only now beginning to obtain some faint glimpse of the philosophical objects of history; and it is no wonder that the annals of blood and rapine on which it has been customary to bestow the name, were looked upon with contempt by recluses whose minds were occupied with really intellectual studies. The bards and genealogists, however, of some of the Chsatrya families, were no more idle than they have been under other modifications of feudality; but their rude and meagre compilations have no pretensions to be classed with historical works.

The age of the Vedas cannot even be conjectured, but it is supposed they were first collected about fourteen centuries before the Christian era. The first Veda contains hymns, precepts, and maxims; the second concerns oblations and sacrifices; the third is supposed to possess a peculiar degree of holiness, its texts being usually chanted in the temples; and the fourth is used in conciliating the offended deities and in cursing enemies, besides containing the Vedanta, or treatises of divine

service, called Upanishats, on which the whole theology is founded. Besides these, the orthodox guides are the Upavedas, or treatises on medicine, music, war, and the mechanical arts; the Angas, which treat of pronunciation, religious ceremonies, grammar, prosody, astronomy, and the meaning of words and phrases in the Vedas; and the Upangas, containing the Puranas, for the instruction and entertainment of man; the Nyayu, or books on apprehension, reason, and judgment; the Mimansa, of moral and religious duties; and the Dherma Sastra, the body of law and justice.

All these works go under the general name of Vedyas, or parts of knowledge; but the Ramayana and the Mahabharat, two mythologico-historical poems, have likewise a sacred character, and are forbidden to the perusal of the servile class. This prohibition would be no great punishment to Europeans, although an anthology might be culled from them which would be valuable in either hemisphere. "J'y trouve des choses sublime," says Schlegel, "d'autres pleines de charme et de grace, une fécondité inépuisable de l'imagination, l'attrait du marveilleux, de nobles charactère, des situations passionnées, et je ne sais quelle candeur sainte et ingénue dans les mœurs qui y sont peints." Various other poems of a like nature have been translated either in whole or in part, and are equally unintelligible to European taste in their construction, and equally admirable in insulated passages.

But the dramatic literature of the Hindoos is still more remarkable, evidencing, as it does, not mere literary genius, but a luxury of art which, with reference to the age and the people, absolutely confounds the imagination. If we recollect the rude beginnings of the countrymen of Euripides, and the still ruder beginnings

of those of Shakspeare, we must conclude, if we are to be guided at all by such analogies, that Sacontala could have been produced only among a cultivated people. This drama has occasioned much controversy both among the learned and the unlearned; some pronouncing the author to be a Hindoo Shakspeare, and some treating the construction at least of the poem with ridicule and contempt. That it may have been overpraised is possible enough, but on the other side is exhibited a strange ignorance of the most obvious principles of criticism. Sacontala does not belong to our age and country, but to India in the time of the ancient Brahmins; and the influences operating upon the destinies of the personages are, of course, derived from the belief of the people. The fatality which pursues the lovers is not the villainy of a rival, but the curse of a Brahmin—a calamity at which the very gods were supposed to quake; their reconciliation is effected not by the elucidation of a mystery, which is no mystery to the reader, but by means of an enchanted ring; and their union at last takes place, not by the consent of parents, but by the direct agency of the divinities themselves. "From this specimen of the Indian drama," says Robertson in his Disquisition, "every reader of good taste, I should imagine will be satisfied, that it is only among a people of polished manners and delicate sentiments that a composition so simple and correct could be produced or relished;" and the great variety of dramatic works in Hindoo literature is affirmed by Sir William Jones, who tells us that "the tragedies, comedies, farces, and musical pieces of the Indian theatre would fill as many volumes as that of any nation in ancient or modern Europe." Of love poems and songs there is also a great abundance, although many of the most celebrated of the former are supposed,

like the odes of Hafiz, to be moral or religious allegories.

Little as the immense literature of the Hindoos is known, it will probably never be much more so; because for practical purposes it is of little use in the present age of the world, and in the department of imagination it is little adapted to the taste of Europeans; while the objects of mere literary curiosity would not repay the trouble of extensive translation. That it did not make further advances, or at least submit to greater changes in the flow of time, is owing to the same circumstances which controlled in other respects the genius of the people. It was imprisoned, besides, in the unalterable language of the Brahmins, and wedded to the eternal mysteries of the temple; till, like the knowledge of the mechanical arts enshrined in the Upavedas, it became, in the progress of national degradation, almost a dead letter. "It results from this analysis," says Sir William Jones, "that the Veda, Upaveda, Vedanga, Purana, and Dersana, are the six great Sastras, in which all knowledge, divine and human, are supposed to be comprehended. Whenever we direct our attention to Hindoo literature, the notion of infinity presents itself; and the longest life would not be sufficient for the perusal of near five hundred thousand stanzas in the Purana, with a million more, perhaps, in the other works before mentioned."

We must now glance at the effect of the Mahomedan conquest upon the condition of the people in the particulars treated of in the present chapter.

"The sword," says the Prophet, "is the key of heaven and of hell: a drop of blood shed in the cause of God, a night spent in arms, is of more avail than two months of fasting or prayer: whoever falls in battle his sins are

forgiven: at the day of judgment his wounds shall be resplendent as vermilion, and odoriferous as musk; and the loss of his limbs shall be supplied by the wings of angels and cherubims." On the principles contained in this sentence the Arabs first set forth from their deserts, and we have seen how closely guided by it their descendants or proselytes were in their invasion of India. The expeditions of the Arabs in Asia bear no analogy to those of the Goths and other barbarous nations in Europe. The latter may be said to have had no religion themselves, but adopted that of the countries they overran, and were thus speedily sunk and lost in their population. The mission of the Arabs, on the other hand, was peculiarly religious; their object was conversion by means of the sword; and Islamism either became the faith of the nations they subdued, or, as was the case in India where they found themselves only a drop in a vast population, they remained distinct and alone. This permanence of Mahomedanism, however, is only such in the restricted sense in which the word must be applied to all human affairs. In India some of the followers of the Prophet fell off, from time to time, into Paganism, and new sects arose in great numbers among the faithful, which render obsolete the wonder of Gibbon at the long continuance of so comparatively pure a spirit of devotion as is preached in the Koran.

The question of the comparative civilization of the two races, Hindoos and Mahomedans, has been long agitated, and when decided in favour of the latter, it is usual to say that the former *must* have benefited by falling under the sway of a people more refined than themselves. On this subject we would merely refer to historical results. After a reign unparalleled in its bloody character, the Mahomedan dominion fell in pieces, leaving the country in a

worse state than before. Where the benefit is to be looked for we cannot conceive; nor do we know of any vestiges of refinement extant beyond the remains of a few tombs and palaces, and of some of those public works which were in all ages created both by the Hindoo princes and by the munificence of private individuals. Mill triumphantly cites the degraded state of human nature under the Hindoo governments of Nepaul, Mysore, and Travancore, as a proof that India must have gained by passing under a Mahomedan government; but he forgets that there are likewise states in India which afford an eloquent testimony of the condition of human nature under Mahomedan rule.

The Mahomedan government was a regular tyranny, limited only by the power of the prince. The Koran was to him what the Vedas were to the Hindoo princes; but it had no interpreter but his own passions. The viceroys and all other officers of the kingdom were appointed by him; he was, at least nominally, the proprietor of the lands, and the heir of his subjects; and he had the right of choosing his own successor. Under such a system, it is needless to say that the prosperity of the country depended entirely upon the individual character of the monarch. Under the Patan dynasty the omrahs every now and then started up into kings, and the imperial dominions were occasionally limited to the precincts of the court; but in some instances the princes of the house of Timour were able statesmen, and kept the great officers in due subjection. During the decline of the empire, however, the nabobs, or military governors of provinces, originally paid by the Dewan, or manager of the revenue, farmed the taxes at a certain sum, and retained the extorted surplus for themselves. Thus the real power, both civil and military, passed into the hands of the

governors, and the Dewan, from being a powerful minister, sank into a mere collector. The nabobs, when the king took the field, joined the imperial standard with their troops; but each nabob erected his own standard and formed a separate camp. The troops owed allegiance to their immediate chiefs, not to the emperor; and these at length took only such orders from the general in chief as they chose to obey.

In the administration of justice there was, in some respects, an improvement upon the Hindoo system. The laws were contained in the Koran and in the transmitted usages of the people; but an extensive right of appeal sometimes served to prevent injustice, and sometimes merely to prolong the suit. There were justices of the peace in the subdivisions of the pergunna; inferior judges in the larger districts; chief justices in the provinces; and the tribunal of the viceroy over all. All these courts were extremely venal; although in civil suits the *legal* fees were one-fourth part of the property in question, and in the criminal law murder was rarely punished with death, there being an affixed price of blood.

The Hindoo code, even in the opinion of Sir William Jones, one of its greatest advocates, was "a system of despotism and priestcraft, abounding with minute and childish formalities, with ceremonies generally absurd, and often ridiculous;" its "punishments were partial and fanciful, — for some crimes dreadfully cruel, for others reprehensibly slight;" and "its very morals, though rigid enough on the whole, were, in one or two instances (as in the cases of light oaths and pious perjury), unaccountably relaxed." The Mussulman code had almost all these defects. It was full of religious intolerance, and of idle formalities. It was scrupulous to

excess in the matter of evidence, but extremely indifferent to substantial justice. In both codes women were only partially received as witnesses. Even this picture of the Mussulman courts applies only to the best periods of the empire; for when the English came upon the scene they found no stated times for sitting, no stated forms but at the will of superiors, no appeal from unjust decisions, no limit to fees and perquisites, but every man of property and consideration acting as a judge and tyrannizing over the people.*

The lands were parcelled out into districts for the collection of the revenue, which was farmed by Zemindars; and these individuals, by well-employed bribery at

* The following were the officers of the Mahomedan courts:—

The *Nazim*, or supreme magistrate, presided personally in the trial of capital offenders. He held his court once every Sunday.

The *Dewan* was the supposed magistrate for the decision of causes relating to real estates, or property in land; but he seldom exercised his authority in person.

The *Daroga Adawlut al Aulea* (or *Daroga* of the high court of justice), was the deputy of the *Nazim*, deciding all cases of property, excepting inheritance in land. He also took cognisance of quarrels, affrays, and abusive language.

The *Daroga Adawlut Dewannee*, was the deputy of the *Dewan*, and judge in all cases of landed property.

The *Foujdar* was the officer of police, and judge in all crimes not capital. In capital crimes the proofs were taken before him, and sent to the *Nazim* for his sentence.

The *Cazee* was the judge of all claims of inheritance and succession; he performed the necessary Mussulman ceremonies, at weddings, births, funerals, &c.

The *Moohtesib* had the cognisance of drunkenness, of the vending of spirituous liquors, and of weights and measures.

The *Mooftee* was the expounder of the law, and he, as well as the *Moohtesib*, assisted the *Cazee* in his court.

The *Canoongoes* were the registers of lands. They had no authority excepting when causes were referred to them by the *Nazim*, the *Dewan*, or *Daroga Adawlut*.

The *Cotwal* was the peace-officer of the night.

court, retained their office for life, and were sometimes able to leave it to their heirs, till the lordship of the district was supposed to be vested in the family. The revenue itself went through several successive hands before reaching the imperial treasury, and was increased upon the produce of the land from the sixth part taken by the Hindoo princes to one-third, and ultimately to one-half. The Zemindars, thus constituted the proprietors of the land, let it out to the best bidders at short leases, and these again to under-farmers, and so on till the rent fell upon the actual cultivator like a millstone. This system ruined the head men of the village, who might have been said to be the middle class of India, and crushed them down into the general mass of poverty; while it laid the whole body of ryots prostrate at the feet of the money-lenders, without whose aid the farmer could not obtain even seed to put in the ground.

Little needs be said on the subject of literature. With the exception of Akbar, the Mahomedan princes appear to have been very incurious as to Hindoo learning, which gradually declined under their rule till it became nearly extinct. The historical work of Ferishta is the chief practical benefit that has been conferred upon the literature of India by the conquerors, as it illustrates a department which had been wholly neglected by the Hindoos.

CHAPTER V.

MANNERS AND MORALS.

While endeavouring to ascertain what was the state of manners among the people of ancient India, which can only be done by means of their early literature, we are stopped at the outset by a strange and important contradiction between the Law and the Drama. The latter describes the Brahmins as the simple, austere, and powerful priests we should picture them to be from a consideration of the former; but in those mirrors of social life which the drama has presented in all ages and countries, we find the women in a condition of society so absolutely different from the one assigned to them by the laws, that we are at a loss to understand how the two authorities can refer to the same country. "By a girl, or by a young woman, or by a woman advanced in years, nothing," says Menu, "must be done, even in her own dwelling-place, according to her mere pleasure. In childhood must a female be dependent on her father; in

youth on her husband; her lord being dead on her sons: a woman must never seek independence." However faithless or base, "a husband must constantly be revered as a god by a virtuous wife." "Neither by *sale* nor desertion can a wife be released from her husband." "A wife may be corrected with a rope or the small shoot of a cane." "Women have no business with the texts of the Veda;" and in law they can only be witnesses in causes concerning their own sex. "Be there no place, be there no time, be there no one to tempt them," says the Hetopadesa, "*then* doth woman's chastity appear . . . . infidelity, violence, deceit, envy, extreme avariciousness, a total want of good qualities, with impurity, are the innate faults of womankind." "A woman," in the code of Gentoo laws, "is never satisfied with sensual pleasures any more than fire is satisfied with burning fuel, or the main ocean with receiving the rivers, or the empire of death with dying men and animals."

Such are women in the laws of the Hindoos: little better than domestic slaves,—wild and mischievous but beautiful animals kept in cages for ornament and amusement. In the early poems and plays, on the other hand, they are represented as being everything that is amiable and refined, and as free as the ladies of Europe. In Sacontala they are the pupils of Brahmins; they exercise the rites of hospitality, and they are proficients in painting; and the heroine herself, virtuous, religious, and yet loving, is as full of the purity as she is of the poetry of nature. To reconcile this difference appears to be impossible, unless we imagine that the character, and therefore the position, of woman had changed in the lapse of time, while the descriptions we have given of them, although obsolete in fact, remained stereotyped in the permanence of the laws.

The ancients say little about the Hindoo women; although their segregation at the time of Alexander's expedition may be inferred from an anecdote given on the personal authority of Onesicritus, of the jealousy of a king near the Delta of the Indus, who condemned to death those men who had looked upon his women, or who approached them within a certain distance. On the other hand, it would appear from the obscure sources from which Colonel Tod has drawn his conjectures respecting the existence of the feudal regime, that about the period of the Patan invasion, women were the objects of such heroical love and devotion as in Europe gave its greatest charm to the age of chivalry. It would be waste of time, however, to speculate on the subject. All we know, or can know, with certainty is, that, from the time when India was first visited by modern Europeans, the women of the upper classes were found in nearly the same state of seclusion as the Mahomedan women. The ancient laws, notwithstanding, if they were ever applicable at all to the condition of the people, had now become pretty nearly a dead letter. The mother was the object of the son's unbounded respect; so much so that in high families it was customary for the heir, at the death of his father, to see the affairs of the estate go to utter ruin, before he could summon resolution enough to wrest the authority from the hands of his mother. When an Indian mother, on the banks of the Nerbudda, was without children, she sometimes promised her first-born to the god of destruction, Mahadeo; and it was never necessary to redeem the vow either by violence, or in the infancy of the child. When the future victim reached the age of intelligence, she communicated to him his destiny, and from that moment he considered himself devoted to the god. He at once assumed the habit of a religious

mendicant, and spent one, two, or at most three years in pilgrimage to the most celebrated temples, and then repairing, at the time of the annual fair, to the Mahadeo hills which rise above the Nerbudda, threw himself from a precipice several hundred feet high, and was dashed to pieces upon the rocks below.

No circumstance of life destroyed the reciprocal rights and duties of parents and sons; but when a girl married, all with her was at an end. She belonged no more to her own kindred, but to those of her husband. His family became her family, his mother her mother. In widowhood and in age she was supported by her new relations; it was on them any misconduct of hers reflected disgrace, not on those with whom she was connected by blood; and at her death, whatever property she might have inherited from her husband, went to the widow of his brother in preference to her own brother.

Marriage was among the Hindoos, as with the Mahomedans, a sacred duty, and a family with a daughter unmarried after the age of puberty, was looked upon as labouring under the consequences of sin. Marriage was a festival which employed the thoughts and preparations of the whole family for years before it took place, and which eventually absorbed a great part, if not the whole of their capital. Parents never thought of laying out upon their lands, or in providing for their children, money which was every instant at the mercy of the despotic government and its subordinate functionaries. In some cases they constructed tombs, temples, or tanks, or planted groves, for the benefit of the public, but in all, they lavished whatever sums they possessed or could obtain, in feeding the family, tribe, and whole neighbourhood during the marriage ceremonies.

By the laws, the fidelity of this costly wife was secured

under the most terrific penalties. Adultery was of three sorts: when the parties were alone without reasonable excuse, when the man sent presents to the woman, and when the actual intimacy occurred. The first kind of offence was punished with a heavy fine; the second, in some cases with a fine, in others, with amputation of a limb; and the third, with death. But it may be questioned whether these severe laws had much effect one way or another. In our day, when they are in practice so much relaxed that the Hindoos are indignant at the legal impunity with which the offence escapes, their women are by no means remarkable for the want of chastity. Profligacy in the large towns is said to be in much smaller proportion than in London or Paris; and in the rural districts is hardly known at all. The vocation of the women is domestic in India, as elsewhere; and the relative happiness of the sexes is as great as in Europe. The men, however, are not intellectual, and the domestic character of the women not requiring the element of intellectuality, they may be as wives or mistresses the objects of mere sensual gratification, though as mothers they are regarded with intuitive love and veneration.

The segregation of the women did not extend to the lower classes, among whom they might be seen engaged in the occupations of their husbands. There was also a custom in the villages all over India, which introduced them to strangers in a very beautiful and picturesque manner. This was a procession of the females to meet any traveller of distinction. Their leader carried on her head a brazen jug, highly polished, and full of water, and the rest joined her in singing in chorus, while the men stood at some distance in silence. It was customary to put a rupee into the jug, for the purchase of goor

(coarse sugar), of which the females alone partook as an offering to their sex.

Much has been written of the indelicacy of the Hindoo ladies, who in conversation are said to have pronounced and listened to words which would shock the ears even of a European man. This, we apprehend, involves a difference of taste more than anything else. Many of our old plays, which were at one time witnessed with delight by the noble and the fair, would in our day chace their descendants out of the theatre by their almost unimaginable grossness; and yet we have little to boast of in practical morality when compared with our ancestors. We would say, however, that the Hindoo women could hardly be in reality the monsters of indelicacy they are described, since the men looked upon them with an habitual reverence which in the present day makes them the objects of ridicule to the polished European. No exigence destroyed or even suspended this feeling. In the midst of a victorious siege, the Indian soldier, covered with the blood of his enemies, and ravening for plunder, stopped short at the sacred door of the zenana. He struck his sword without remorse through the heart of the defenders of the fortress, but turned away his eyes in confusion from the faces of their wives.

But there was no awkwardness in the Hindoo's reverence for women, any more than in his intercourse with his superiors. He had on the contrary an air of independence without the reality. Accustomed to debate with the government functionaries and others on their own lands, the peasantry had free, though courteous manners, and loud voices. These classes of the population, however, were humane, and even timid, in everything but words. The children had no cruel pastimes. The baya birds built their nests in scores within their reach, secure from

molestation; and flocks of wild peacocks, partridges, and ducks, crowded round the villages in search of food. The Pariah dog sate watching the traveller at his meals, in the certainty of enjoying a portion of the feast. All classes were surprised at the sporting propensities of Europeans. They could understand the propriety of destroying mischievous animals, or shooting game when one is hungry, but the delight others take in killing for the mere excitement of the act was beyond their comprehension.

This gentleness of character remained with them to the last. In the periodical famines with which India has been visited, none of those revolting scenes took place which are described as occurring under such circumstances in other parts of the world. Crowds were seen toiling their way towards the districts which the Angel had spared; and, lying in the village streets unable to proceed further, the fainting mothers offered their children to slavery to preserve lives dearer to them than their own. But hundreds more were observed crawling into gardens and ruins, and concealing themselves under grass or straw, to die in silence and unseen; while numerous families of a more respectable class did not leave their houses at all, but when their means of sustenance were exhausted, took opium and died—husbands, wives, and children—in each others arms.* In like manner, when their basket-huts were destroyed by fire, they removed their little property without a murmur, and built themselves close by a new dwelling as humble and insecure; or when the river overflowed its banks and entered their mud houses, threatening to melt away its walls,—a threat it often executed,—the inhabitants piled their fire-wood on the floor, and sate smoking calmly on the top, in implicit reliance upon the mercy of the watery god.

* Colonel Sleeman declares that he has witnessed such horrors himself.

The practice of exposing their sick or dying on the banks of a river, appears somewhat inconsistent with the general humanity of the national character; but, in reality, it is no more so than their voluntary penances and suicides are inconsistent with their general timidity. A Hindoo, who would not sit down in the presence of his father without requesting and receiving permission, left him without compunction to die by the sacred stream, after having perhaps stopped his nostrils with its mud in order to insure a speedier dissolution. The act itself arose from filial obedience, and the conviction that he thereby secured the happiness of his parent; but the want of feeling exhibited the influence of superstition in deadening the impulses of nature. In like manner, the thugs and poisoners who sacrificed human life for a rupee, were held sinless in their own estimation, because they connected, in some way or other, their dreadful trade with the mysteries of religion. They consulted oracles as to the result of their expeditions; they thanked their god for success; and they presented a portion of the fruits of murder as votive offerings to his shrine. The dacoit, too, was religious in his own eyes, and if he was only careful to rob at a distance, he did not compromise his character in the eyes of others. The more successful he was in crime, the more securely he maintained his respectability among his neighbours—in his village—in his district. On this latter point the Hindoos may be excused by examples drawn from the manners of the ancient Germans as described by Tacitus, as well as of more modern nations of the west, for instance England and Scotland, while a chronic warfare was carried on on the frontiers; but the continuance in India to this day of insensibility to what civilized men call crime and shame, is a stain upon the national character which no ingenuity can obliterate.

The huts throughout the country, and more especially in Bengal, were easily robbed. They were constructed of light bamboo frames, covered with a matting of bruised reeds; and the floors were of clay raised in a solid mass a foot or two from the ground. In these floors the family's few rupees of capital were sometimes buried, and they were quickly mined by the robbers, or the mat walls cut through for their entrance. The spoil was usually the most miserable trifle; but there have been instances of the master of the house being roasted at a slow fire kindled on his own floor, to compel him to discover the place of its concealment. The frequency of this crime is one reason, in addition to those we have already given, why the lower classes of Hindoos, never attempted to save money, but lived from their birth to their death in hopeless dependence upon the money-lenders.

The dacoits, who are described by a commission in 1772, as "abandoned outlaws, not only infesting the highways, but plundering and burning whole villages," rarely murdered their victims, although they sometimes took the lives of informers. The rahzun was a kind of footpad on a small scale, though highway robbery was nearly confined to the upper provinces. The sindeal was the burglar we have described, but usually he was alone, and in a dark night crept like a serpent to the hut, and pierced a hole through its matting, to possess himself of a brass pot, a bit of cloth, or a little rice. The gochores were cow-stealers who mutilated the horns and ears of the animals, and branded them anew above the old marks till the latter became unintelligible. The bumbuttoes robbed on the rivers; some of them, after having engaged themselves as boatmen, by boring a hole in the vessel's bottom, and escaping with the property they coveted as she was in the act of sinking. Common thieves, called chores, who put their

hand to anything, were as frequently found as in Europe, but some castes considered this department of industry to be as peculiarly their own as the employments assigned to them by Menu. These, however, were always the lower tribes, who were so degraded as to eat with one another—or even with Europeans!

Poverty was the parent of crime in India as well as in Europe. When the ryot got so far in debt to the money-lender that the latter stopped the supplies, he fled from his village and had no resource but dishonesty. As a dacoit he fared better. The rice to which he was before confined (not by his religion, as is commonly supposed, but by his poverty) was now intermingled with flesh meat, and washed down with spirits; and, owing chiefly to the disgrace which attended second marriages in India, he would have little difficulty in finding a mistress, who, so long as his affections remain unchanged, would be faithful to him in good and bad fortune alike.

The poverty of the Hindoo, however, was never selfish. He supported his destitute relations both from affection and religious duty; and the consequence was, that beggars (with the exception of the pious mendicants) were rarely to be seen. He was always hospitable, even in the midst of privations; and lest he should be unable to eat with his guest, on account of their difference in caste, it was so customary to provide another table for him, that in the compound or court, which contained the little huts of his family, there was frequently one set apart for the entertainment of strangers.

The manners of the Hindoos were modified by two great circumstances, the geographical character of the district, and the institution of caste. The tribes, having different rights, duties, and employments, had different characteristics. In the plains of Bengal, with the exception of

such differences, the people were one; all essential distinctions of races having disappeared in the gradual course of ages; while in Upper India, and in the high lands of the Deccan, each separate territory presented what might appear to be a separate nation. A description, therefore, of the manners of the whole country would require many volumes; while a task like ours demands only such generalization as is practicable, and forbids details.

The details usually given refer to the ceremonial of life as set down in the puranas; for almost every action, however common or necessary, from the washing of the teeth to the choice of a wife, is the subject of religious precept. But the description, however accurate in words, does not convey a correct picture to the mind; for, even when the ceremonies were fully performed, which we presume to have been rarely the case, habit gave so much ease and rapidity to their execution, that they were sometimes hardly observable by a stranger. Indeed, were it otherwise, the Hindoo, with his numerous holidays and festivals—amounting in some years to near a hundred—would have had no time to procure for himself and his family even the simple fare, the coarse and scanty dress, and the mud or matting hut, with which they were satisfied.

There are seven kinds of marriage enumerated by Menu, besides the simple one exemplified by the pure Sacontala, which resembled a union of the present day in Scotland, where we are told it is difficult to discover what does *not* constitute a marriage. A plurality of wives appears to have been more common formerly than in later times. The lower classes at least were usually satisfied with one, although this may be attributed as much to their poverty as to their prudence. The burning of widows with the corpses of their husbands was unquestionably approved, if not commanded, by the ancient

books. This kind of suicide was exempted from the privation of obsequies decreed as a punishment for that crime, and the faithful wife insured of a participation with her husband in an existence of supreme felicity during the reign of fourteen Indras. In the Dabistán, however, by a Persian writer who passed the greater part of his life in India, we are told that, according to "the enlightened doctors," by a woman becoming a sati, it is meant that "she should consume in the fire along with her husband *all her desires;*" woman, in metaphysical language, signifying "passion." Later authorities than those quoted by Mohsan Fani assert, that the most virtuous sati is performed by a widow dying of affliction for the loss of her husband.

After the funeral ceremony, the mourners purified themselves by bathing, and then sitting down, consoled each other by repeating various texts, such as—"The earth is perishable; the ocean, the gods themselves pass away; and should not that bubble, mortal man, meet destruction?" The entire ceremonial, however, did not end for a year.

The Mahomedans form too important a part of the population to be overlooked in any estimate of the morals and manners of India; but on a superficial glance, they were not so different from the rest of the people as might be supposed. The upper classes of the two races pretty nearly resembled each other; and the management of their families, and seclusion of their women being similar, but little difference was observable except in the nicer shades of character. The lower classes, again, were similar in poverty; both being crushed down to the soil by a weight of what in any other country would be termed misery. In India, however, although there was much poverty, there was no such thing as destitution.

The people were almost naked, but in such a climate they felt no want of clothing; their huts were in general little better than tents, but they sufficed to sleep in at night, and they wanted nothing but shade during the day; and as for food, although neither Hindoos nor Mussulmans are forbidden flesh, they were satisfied with a meal of rice or beans, which they could obtain with but little sacrifice of that ease which, to an oriental, is preferable to everything but the bare necessaries of life.

On considering the two races closer, however, we find numerous shades of distinction. In the Mussulman, the Tartar blood was not yet fully acclimatized. They had more energy than the Hindoos, and were therefore more turbulent. They surpassed them in all the vices that require strength of character, or stubbornness of will. They were more voluptuous, more intemperate, more proud, fierce, intolerant, cruel, and revengeful. The Hindoo, if placed in circumstances to admit of it, saved money to enable him to retire into the bosom of his family; while the dissolute habits of the Mussulman retained him in poverty, and chained him to the oar for life. The strength of the sexual passions in the latter gave him up to a shameful debauchery, which occasioned premature decay as surely as the precocious marriages of the Hindoo. At twenty-five an Indian woman, who was in general a mother when little more than a child, had already the wrinkles and grey hairs of age.

The Mussulmans had not merely as much bigotry as the Hindoos, but were as wild and enthusiastic in its display. At the festival of Mohurrum, in commemorating the death of Hossein, they frequently wounded themselves with their daggers, or engaged in bloody and

sometimes fatal combats with each other. Nor were the Hindoos alone in their love of religious magnificence; for it was common for the followers of the simple theism of Mahomed to beggar themselves for the sake of contributing some portion of the glitter of their festivals. On these occasions their mosques were illuminated,—the whole neighbourhood was one blaze of light, and the eye was dazzled with the flashing of the gilded and silvered work which adorned their processions. "The most pompous ceremonies in Europe," says Tennant, "make a very feeble impression upon those who have been spectators of Mahomedan solemnities."

We have frequently mentioned the timidity of the Hindoos; but this is the timidity of a political slave, which is quite distinct from personal cowardice. Every page of the bloody history of India proves that the country was lost solely through political disorganization, while every page teems with examples of the courage of the people. The Mahomedan dominion was totally subverted, as Rickards well observes, not by a European, but by a Hindoo power; and in later times British armies have been defeated by the same force, and have surrendered, retreated, or even fled before the "cowards" of Hindostan.* That the bravery of the natives has been able to do so little for the liberty of their country,

* General Napier's opinion of the Indian soldiers is worth quoting:—"From the want of European officers," says he in a letter dated 1842, "the young and ignorant are left for regimental duty, and the natives are the *real officers*, and very good ones too. The soubadars are respectable men of high caste and very daring; many have the order of merit on their breast for daring actions. The other day the bearers of a palanquin with a wounded officer in it, being pressed by the Affghans, set it down and ran; the Affghans made a rush to murder the officer, a sepoy sergeant ran up, shot the first Affghan, slew the second with his bayonet, and defended his

is owing to circumstances with which mere personal bravery could not contend. Their subjugation by the Mahomedans was merely an added weight to their slavery, for the Mahomedans themselves were slaves; whereas, in the other hemisphere, the barbarous hordes that conquered Europe were as free and wild as the winds, and yet the great body of the people, vanquished and vanquishers alike, sunk into a servile condition worse than that of India, from which they emerged only by slow and painful degrees after the lapse of many centuries.

In treating of the character of the people, however, the misfortune is, that India has rarely had fair play either from her friends or enemies. The most minute accounts we have of her institutions and their effects are from holy men who crossed the ocean for the express purpose of spying out the sins of Pagans, and comparing them with the righteousness, not of Christians—who, if history is to be believed, have in all ages ranked with the most depraved of mankind—but of Christianity. Those inquirers of course found what they sought, and were highly successful in suggesting such points of criminal difference as turned the balance completely against the religionists of Brahma. Another class of our instructors has been formed of those lay apostles of society who, going forth in early life with their ductile minds indelibly impressed with the seal of European civilization, tried in vain to find a corresponding mark on the Hindoo. They discovered instead merely a daub of clay on the forehead, and have reported accordingly. A third, disgusted with what they profanely call the bigotry and ignorance of

officer till help came; and, mind! at this moment they were retreating and hotly pursued; it, therefore, was done in the most trying circumstances."—Napier's "Conquest of Scinde."

these two, and inspired themselves with a fine and heroical spirit, have sometimes mistaken the impulse of generosity for that of reason. It is not enough with such champions to defend the Hindoos,—they must put them in a position to challenge the whole world. They must prove them to be unapproached in antiquity, unparalleled in wisdom, immaculate in morality.

The truth lies somewhere in the middle of these extremes. With a religion stumbled upon by the light of nature, at a time when they were in all probability alone even in that comparatively early stage of refinement—and with political institutions, laws, and social usages, forming a part of this religion,—the Hindoos passed through unknown ages without encountering any of those circumstances which have elsewhere changed the character of civilization. They remained stedfast amidst the revolutions of the world. The waves of conquest dashed over them, changing the political surface of their society, but unable to penetrate into the mighty mass beneath, or to disorganize the primitive simplicity of their institutions. They derived no wisdom, and felt but little decrepitude from years. Within their memory the Roman empire rose and perished, and the British empire, extending itself from a small island in the western sea, clasped its Briarean arms around the world. But the Hindoo saw nothing, felt nothing, understood nothing. Content with the religion, the laws, the arts and sciences of his ancestors when the world was young, he remained a boy in its senility. It matters not to what sect he may seem to attach himself: Vishnoo the Preserver is his real patron. The Destroyer and Reproducer, who is elsewhere the god of nations, meddles not with the fatalities of the Hindoo.

It is waste of time to compare the religion, govern-

ment, literature, and usages of the early world with those of the present. The natural state of man is no more Hindooism than it is savageism. At this moment, even in the most cultivated parts of Europe, society is only midway in its progress: we are all pressing forward unconsciously to the fulfilment of an unknown destiny, our views bounded by the narrow circle of the present; the past and the future, the beginning and the end, being alike hidden from our vision. But while the Hindoo is far behind us on this journey he has his own compensations. His natural goodness of character struggles, and as regards the body of the people struggles successfully, with the imperfections of his early institutions. Moderate in his passions and appetites, affectionate and submissive to his parents, reverential to women, humane, hospitable, industrious, ingenious, he stands forth a fine specimen of the antique world, before the windows of heaven were re-opened, and Christianity, war, and science, (extraordinary associates!) had begun to spread, like a new flood, over the earth.

The brief sketch we have given of the character of the people generally as they appeared at the beginning of the English conquests, would apply to them with little difference at the present day; but in another place we shall have to notice some important changes operated on the classes which came more immediately in contact with Europeans. In the mean time, it is our task to endeavour to convey some intelligible idea of the movements of the Western nations in India, and of the causes which led to the erection of a British dominion upon the ruins of the Mogul empire.

BOOK III.

THE HISTORY OF THE SETTLEMENTS OF THE ENGLISH AND OTHER EUROPEAN NATIONS IN INDIA.

CHAPTER I.

FROM THE BATTLE OF PLASSEY TO THE ACQUISITION OF BENGAL BY THE ENGLISH.

Hitherto we have viewed the English in India as a commercial body, struggling for existence with other nations of Europe, and eventually drawn by the force of circumstances into the boiling vortex in which the Mahomedan dominion was engulfed. After the battle of Plassey, however, in 1757, they appear in a new character: they become all on a sudden a political power, and commence a career as yet unparalleled in the history of the world. But no one who has followed the stream of our narrative will mistake the true source of their power, or misunderstand its apparently miraculous effects. An

empire which, at its very best epochs, depended entirely upon the character of the reigning prince, was now broken into innumerable fragments; and a people, ignorant from their birth of the very names of national union and public liberty, were in the gripe of individual tyrants whom they abhorred. Bands of hungry mercenaries, cheated by their employers and hated by the peasantry, were everywhere under arms, ready for work, and ravening for plunder. Could the new adventurers have desired a more auspicious moment for flinging themselves into the melée? "It is apparent," writes Colonel Dow only a few years after, "that the immense regions of Hindostan might be all reduced by a handful of regular troops. Ten thousand European infantry, together with the sepoys in the Company's service, are not only sufficient to conquer all India, but to maintain it for ages as an appendage to the British crown!" He scouts the idea of holding back from the fear of committing injustice—an idea which afterwards took some hold of the public mind in England, partly from the misconduct of the usurpers, and partly from the habit we fall into—and which is perpetuated by History—of considering the country the property of the chiefs, not of the people. "Hindostan," says he, "is at present torn to pieces by factions. All laws, divine and human, are trampled under foot. Instead of one tyrant as in the time of the empire, the country now groans under thousands, and the voice of the oppressed multitude reaches heaven. It would, therefore, be promoting the cause of justice and humanity, to pull those petty tyrants from the height to which their villanies have raised them, and to give to so many millions of mankind a government founded upon the principles of virtue and justice."

Before pursuing the fortunes of the English in Bengal,

the chronological order of events demands a glance at the state of affairs in the Carnatic.

The French were waiting for reinforcements from Europe, and the English, weakened by the absence of the Bengal detachment, were so glad of the breathing time, that neither party would have renewed hostilities so soon as they did, but for our countrymen employing themselves in some military operations to enforce the collection of the revenues of the nabob their influence had appointed. The dispersion of their troops tempted the French to abandon their pacific policy, and all on a sudden they presented themselves in considerable force before Trichinopoly; but from this position they were compelled to withdraw, under circumstances attended with some disgrace, the garrison being relieved, in spite of their opposition, by Captain Calliaud with a very small British force. A revenue war now commenced on a small scale, and neither party seems to have thought of anything but the forcible collection of the taxes of the unhappy territory.

The English were in great difficulties for money, for the nabobship of Arcot was by no means so productive as they had expected; but a circumstance now occurred which made matters much worse. A Mahratta force, which was in possession of the neighbouring kingdom of Mysore, observing the confusion prevailing in the Carnatic, took possession of one of the passes leading direct to Arcot, and demanded six years' chout for the whole territory, which they pretended to be due under a settlement with Nizam-ool-Moolk. The nabob was obliged to comply, and the English, being afraid of accepting the assistance which was eagerly offered them by various independent chiefs, paid the money out of the revenues assigned to them for the expenses of the war. Captain Calliaud

obtained possession of Madras; and the French, after obtaining a reinforcement of a thousand men from Europe, captured various forts and established collectors in the districts. The revenue war now became a war of robbery; and the year 1757, so important for the destinies of the English, saw them at its close industriously engaged in the Carnatic in the plunder of defenceless villages.

In the mean time the French power in the northern part of the Deccan was supreme. Bussy, their commander, exhibited extraordinary genius, not only for war but also for the crooked policy of oriental counsels; and he was already the virtual master of the most important parts of the Peninsula, when all on a sudden he heard of the arrival of a French squadron of twelve sail in the roads of Fort St. David.

This powerful armament was under the command of Count de Lally, a Gallicized Irishman, a magnificent and impetuous soldier, who appears to have set out on his expedition as if it had been the procession of a triumph. He anchored his fleet near the English fort, and proceeding himself to Pondicherry, despatched there before nightfall a large body of troops towards Fort St. David. Weary, hungry, and exhausted, this force, which had wandered out of its way, did not reach their destination, although distant only sixteen miles, till the following morning at seven o'clock; but their spirits were then reanimated by the spectacle of the French fleet riding gallantly in the roads beneath, and the haughty flag of their country waving in the golden sun of India. Presently, however, the southward horizon presented objects of as great interest, for an English fleet, ship after ship, was seen pressing towards the menaced quarter. The French admiral immediately weighed anchor, and bore

down to Pondicherry; not to fly, but to recall two vessels which had left him with Lally. His signals were unanswered, and standing out to sea he formed his line of battle, consisting of nine sail, the English parallel being only seven. The two fleets were seen to engage, and the cannonade heard booming along the waters; but the vessels fell to leeward as the action went on, till they gradually disappeared.

This fight had no important results for either party, but the English were thrown into great alarm by the preponderance of the French. On the 1st of May, Lally was before Fort St. David in person, with 5000 men, half European half native, while the garrison consisted only of 536 Europeans fit for service, and 1600 natives. These numbers were very differently reported by the French; but at any rate the place capitulated on the 1st of June, and its fortifications were razed to the ground.

The English now trembled for Madras; but Lally, by his imperious and inconsequent disposition, had made enemies of everybody around him: his exchequer, besides, was empty; and he determined, before undertaking so difficult an enterprise, to recruit it, like other conquerors, from the hoards of the natives. The collectorship of revenues, in which both French and English were so well experienced, was too slow and uncertain; and, getting together an army, he set forth upon a raid into the kingdom of Tanjore, to compel its monarch to liquidate a debt of 5,600,000 rupees he had contracted in a former difficulty. On his march he did all he could in the way of collecting treasure, but that all was little; for even at Kineloor, where he expected that the accumulations of ages in a celebrated pagoda would make him a new Mahmoud of Ghizni, he found nothing but some

brazen images, although he dug the houses, dragged the tanks, and shot six brahmins from the muzzles of artillery. Arrived at Tanjore, the capital, he negotiated and bombarded by turns, till at length, after effecting a breach in the walls, he returned precipitately to the coast on hearing that an English fleet had arrived at Carrical, the place from which alone he could receive supplies.

The two fleets, after much manœuvring, had encountered again off Carrical on the 2nd of August, the French consisting of eight sail and the English of seven; but when the fight had scarcely lasted an hour, the former gave way and made all sail for Pondicherry, returning thence on the 2nd September to Mauritius, notwithstanding the remonstrances of Lally and the other authorities.

The next expedition of Lally was against Arcot; and the English in their consternation having called in the greater part of their troops and concentrated them upon Madras, he met with little difficulty. On this occasion he was joined by Bussy, whom, with strange infatuation, he had recalled from his brilliant and important position with the soubahdar. Lally, however, treated all plans which did not originate in himself with habitual contempt, and already he was in imagination master of Madras, and on his way to the extinction of the British power in Bengal. On the 13th October, he took possession of the black town of Madras with an army which, notwithstanding his own pecuniary sacrifices, had not a week's provision; and he was already constructing his batteries to bombard the fort, when the news of the arrival at Pondicherry of a frigate with a million livres induced him to convert the bombardment into a siege. The siege was carried on with great spirit; and the English, with plenty of money from Bengal and other supplies, and sufficient time for preparation, made an

excellent defence; when, just as all things were ready for the assault on the 16th February, Admiral Pocock with the fleet arrived in the roads. The French treasure was by this time exhausted; the sepoys deserted for want of pay, and the troops were short both of provisions and ammunition: yet they were permitted to retire without molestation.

The greater part of 1759 was passed in a series of unimportant military operations, which had little effect on the general result, and in struggles on both sides with the poverty which crippled them; till on the 22nd the two armies met in a field battle before Wandiwash in pretty equal force, when the French were totally defeated. The English followed up the blow with spirit, though apparently still unconscious of the extremity of distress to which their opponents were reduced; place after place yielded to their arms, till at length, on the 1st of May, 1760, the French army were shut up in Pondicherry, and the English, having received several successive reinforcements from Europe, were encamped, in the full flush of victory and hope, within four miles of the town. But even at that moment the gallant Frenchman kept them at bay; and to conceal his misery, and perhaps his despair, he even carried the battle into their own quarters, and endeavoured to surprise the English camp. Although the siege was prosecuted with vigour, the trenches were not opened till the 12th of January, 1760, but by that time the enemy were almost in starvation, and the fiercest dissensions prevailed in their councils. Even the spirit of Lally could hold out no longer, and on the 14th the capital of French India surrendered to the British arms, and by the 5th of April the nation had not a single post remaining in the whole country. The British commander, Coote, intended to take possession of Pondi-

cherry for the crown, but Pigot, governor of Madras, claimed it for the Company; and the military authority was obliged to succumb to the civil; Pigot declaring, with singular audacity, that otherwise he would supply no funds either for the subsistence of the king's troops or of the prisoners. The French nation at home was thrown into a transport of fury by the news of these events, and the ministry of the day sacrificed the chivalrous though imprudent Lally to shield themselves from public odium. On his return to France he was degraded, imprisoned, gagged, dragged to the scaffold in a dung-cart, and murdered in form of law; leaving a son behind him, however, destined one day to avenge his father in the Constituent Assembly, by assisting to call down the destroying thunder of Heaven upon the French monarchy.

In Bengal, still more important events were in progress. Meer Jaffier, the traitor who had leagued himself with Clive, assumed the nabobship, with the sanction of the British, his former master having been murdered (a matter of course in India), immediately after the battle. His pecuniary engagements to his European friends now began to weigh heavily upon him; and, probably to obtain the means of payment, he engaged in a struggle with some wealthy and powerful Hindoos, whom he found high in office in his dominions. This occasioned an insurrection in one part of the provinces, which was followed by others, till at length Jaffier was compelled to call for the aid of Clive, which was tardily afforded, his army being sick, and many of the Europeans dead, from excesses committed by means of their prize money.

The affairs of the provinces were easily settled, and Clive, as the price of his assistance, had the address to obtain from the Company the monopoly of saltpetre.

But this body appeared to have but little personal liking for him, as, on the 20th June, 1758, a commission arrived for remodelling the government, which was now to consist of a council of ten members, and no fewer than four governors (among whom Clive was not included), to preside in rotation. The new nominees, however, understood the position of affairs better than the directors at home, and setting aside the ordinance with little ceremony, they elected Clive the sole president; an informality the Company were but too happy to forgive as soon as they heard of the battle of Plassey.

While the nabob was employed in making himself as unpopular as possible by his intrigues and his tyranny, Clive, who had received an application for assistance from his countrymen in the Carnatic, determined to make a diversion in their favour, which should at the same time leave him with the troops at his command. On the proposal, accordingly, of one of the Polygars of the Northern Circars, he sent a force under the command of Colonel Forde to take advantage of Bussy's recall from that territory. The French were defeated near Rajamundri; Masulipatum carried by assault under circumstances of fearful difficulty; and in the event this brilliant expedition was rewarded by the cession of a considerable territory to the English, and the alliance of the Soubahdar of the Deccan, who, deserted by Bussy, had no longer confidence in the power of the French.

During the absence of this expedition, Clive was threatened by a very important danger, the approach of the forces of the Soubahdar of Allahabad, the Nabob of Oude, and other chiefs, commanded, for the sake of appearance, by the eldest son of the nominal emperor, Alamgir II., invested by his father with authority as viceroy of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa. Clive responded

promptly to the call of Jaffier for aid, and joining forces with Meeram, the son of the latter, marched to the relief of Patna, which was threatened by the so-called imperial army. Here, however, a circumstance occurred which exhibited in a striking light the disunion of the country, and which the English might have taken as an omen of their destiny. The Nabob of Oude, instead of joining the prince according to his declared intention, seized upon the fortress of him of Allahabad; and the latter, hastening back to protect his own dominions was put to death by his rival. When Clive approached Patna, therefore, he found no enemy to encounter, but the heir of the throne of the Moguls a supplicant for his bounty. Jaffier was so grateful for his escape, that he obtained for his defender the rank of omrah of the empire, and, what was of much more consequence, bestowed upon him, as jaghire, the revenue or rent of the territory round Calcutta, amounting to 30,000*l.* per annum, which the Company were bound to pay in their quality of zemindar.

The next danger was from the Dutch, who, watching with interest and cupidity the acquisitions of the English in Bengal, despatched from Batavia a force composed of Europeans and Malays to their settlement of Chinsura on the Hooghly. The two nations were then at peace, though such an armament could not be intended for the purposes of commerce: at any rate the Europeans in India were never strict observers of the law of nations, and Clive made no scruple of attacking the Hollanders by land and water. Their ships, in number seven, were taken, and out of seven hundred European troops, only fourteen reached Chinsura. The vessels were afterwards returned, on the Dutch paying the expenses of the war; and, thereupon, the successful governor resigned his

post, and early in February, 1760, set out for Europe with his princely fortune.

By this time the fugitive prince had assumed the nominal title of emperor, his father having been assassinated; and, with the Nabob of Oude, whom he made his vizier, and other chiefs, he advanced against the English, to attempt the re-conquest of Bengal. In a partial action near Patna the imperial forces were victorious; but on the 22nd February, in a general engagement in which Colonel Calliaud from the Carnatic commanded the English, the former were completely beaten and the emperor fled to Bahar. From this he took the desperate resolution of leaving the English and their allies behind, and proceeding by forced marches to Moorshedabad to take the nabob prisoner. He was followed by Calliaud and Meeram's cavalry, first along the river, then across the mountains, till they joined on the plains of Bengal, where the emperor set fire to his camp and again fled. With wonderful energy and perseverance, however, it was to Patna he directed his steps which in its present state of desertion was very near falling into his hands; but he was followed with extraordinary promptness by two hundred Europeans and a battalion of sepoys, under the command of Captain Knox, who drove the enemy from their works. This officer soon after performed a still more gallant exploit by engaging an army of twelve thousand men, sent to support the emperor, with only the addition of three hundred horse to his own force, and routing them completely. While Calliaud and Meeram were marching in pursuit of their broken army, the latter was struck with lightning during a storm, and with all his attendants killed upon the spot; whereupon the English commander retired in haste to Patna, on the 29th of July.

Up to this moment the English appear to have been groping blindly after their fortune; but events now hastened on by which they at length received some intimation of the greatness that was preparing for them. The incapacity, and worse the tyranny, and still worse the poverty of their protegé the nabob, completely disgusted them with that personage; and in fact, the confined state of their resources, in consequence of his inability to meet his engagements, rendered it a difficult matter for them to keep up their establishment at all. They at length determined quietly to depose Meer Jaffier, and set up his son-in-law, Meer Cossim, in his stead. This answered very well for a time; but Cossim, though a better financier, was a less tractable tool than the former nabob. A civil war resulted from their disputes, which was carried on with great ferocity on both sides; Cossim enlisted the emperor and the Nabob of Oude in his cause; and, at length, on the 22nd October, 1764, the battle of Buxar established the English fully as the greatest military power in India.

On the 10th of April in the following year Clive, now Lord Clive, arrived at Madras, in the character of commander-in-chief, president, and governor in Bengal. He had been sent out to meet what was supposed to be a critical danger; but, on his arrival found that the new nabob was expelled, the old one dead, and the emperor a dependent upon the English. The ambition that had been smouldering for years, kindled by chance and preserved yet kept down by circumstances, now burst forth into a blaze. He saw what was coming,—what must come,—and addressed himself with the energy of a man of genius to the task that was before him. "*To-morrow,*" wrote he to England in a week after his arrival, "*the whole Mogul empire is in our power!*"—and by the same

opportunity he directed his entire fortune, and as much money as could be *borrowed* in his name, to be *invested in Indian stock!*

On Clive's arrival in Bengal he found the corruption and rapacity of the Company's servants more infamous, perhaps, than those of any oriental government that ever existed. Each man was at daggers-drawn with the rest for his share of the common spoil; and the amount received by the whole since the battle of Plassey, in those bribes which in the east receive the polite name of presents, was little short of six millions sterling. It is a remarkable fact that, in the arrangement with the conquered vizier the Nabob of Oude, this chief while expressing his grateful compliance with the terms offered for his acceptance, peremptorily refused his sanction to the English trading or erecting factories in his dominions, affirming that trade was with them a mere excuse for the most dangerous abuses. The negotiation with the emperor was made without any obstacle, except some expressions of resentment which probably excited only ridicule. He was allowed twenty-six lakhs of rupees for his support, and he was put in possession of the countries of Korah and Allahabad; while, on his part, he executed a firman, dated the 12th of August 1765, granting to the English the Dewannee, or collection and receipt of the revenues of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, or in other words constituting them masters of the country both in fact and name.

It will now be proper to bestow a general glance upon the condition of India at this great epoch, examining cursorily the appearance and relative importance of the larger fragments into which the Mogul empire had been broken up.

Beyond the western frontier of India Proper, Ahmet

Abdalla was at the head of a state which, in point of territory, was almost identical with that of ancient Ghizni, before the Patans crossed the Indus. Besides his possessions on the side of Persia and Tartary, he ruled in Candahar, Cabul, Ghizni, and Peshawur, and over a portion of Moultan and Sinde. Brave, active, and energetic, though in the decline of life, and with a large revenue eaten up by a standing army of one hundred thousand horse, he seemed to threaten Delhi from his mountain fastnesses with a new Affghan dynasty.

From the Indus to Sirhind—(for it was not then the fashion to consider the Sutlege the frontier line)—and in the greater part of Moultan and Sinde, the country was possessed by the Sikhs, originally a religious sect, which had risen into political power during the confusion incidental to the gradual dismemberment of the Mogul empire. Their doctrine was a pure theism, conjoined—since in the east religion and government appear always to go hand in hand—with republican principles; and as they admitted proselytes from all religions without distinction of caste, their ranks were rapidly filled up by the brave or the desperate from surrounding countries. They formed a confederacy rather than a republic, and were only united in war, for which they were able to muster collectively sixty thousand horse.

To the eastward of the Sikhs were the Rohilla Affghans, a cluster of petty chieftainships, whose prince possessed the city of Delhi with the surrounding country, and still styled himself captain-general of the Mogul empire, paying a nominal obedience and respect to the head of the fallen dynasty. The Rohillas, being almost all soldiers, were able to muster one hundred thousand

horse and as many foot; but being without discipline, and their infantry armed chiefly with rockets, to frighten rather than hurt, they were not supposed to be very formidable.

To the eastward of these tribes was a small government of Patans, bordering on the territories of Oude, Allahabad, and Agra, whose prince kept a standing force of two or three thousand horse, which he had hitherto made available for his defence against his formidable neighbours by the simple yet singular expedient of regular pay.

Agra and its extensive territory were occupied by the Hindoo nation of Jats, who appear, so late as the reign of Aurungzebe, to have been nothing more than banditti. They had some strong fortresses, and nominally an army sixty thousand strong.

Bordering on Allahabad were the extensive and fertile countries of Bundelcund and Oude; and beyond them the British possessions—Bengal, Bahar, and, nominally, Orissa.

To the south-west of the Jats was another Hindoo government, able to raise forty thousand men; and after them Marwar, Oodepoor, and various other Rajpoot states.

The dominions of the Mahrattas may be said to have extended irregularly from the Bay of Bengal to the Gulf of Cambay, occupying a great portion of Central India.

In the Deccan the chief powers were Mahomed Ali, the soubahdar, under the influence and control of the British; the Nizam of Hydrabad, with an army of sixty thousand men; and the adventurer, Hyder Ali, in Mysore, whose history we shall shortly have to relate.

Of all this vast country, the sole spot left to the emperor was the united districts of Korah and Alla-

habad. At the latter place the descendant of the house of Timour kept the semblance of a court, "where," says Dow, who knew him personally, "a few ruined omrahs, in hopes of better days to their prince, having expended their fortunes in his service, still exist the ragged pensioners of his poverty, and burden his gratitude with their presence."

CHAPTER II.

FROM THE ACQUISITION OF BENGAL BY THE ENGLISH TO THE PEACE WITH TIPPOO IN 1784.

During the struggle between the English and French in the Peninsula, it became a pretty general opinion among the native potentates, that their own success in the universal scramble which followed the fall of the Mohamedan dominion would very much depend upon the support of one or other of those nations. The triumph of the English, therefore, had the result of placing the Nabob of the Carnatic, Mahomed Ali, so completely in their power that, on one occasion when he attempted to make terms, he was peremptorily told by the Madras president that his sole part was to listen and agree. The Soubahdar of the Deccan was by that time dethroned and put to death by his brother Ali; and it is by the title of the latter, Nizam, that this dignity is henceforward mentioned by Europeans. Clive was not daunted either by the power or personal vigour of the

usurper, but demanded and obtained from the emperor a grant of the Circars, which connected the British dominions on the eastern coast with Bengal, and also the freedom of the Carnatic from the nominal sovereignty of the soubahdar, under whom their own nabob, Mahomed Ali, according to the theory of the Mogul government, was a subordinate ruler.

The energy of the presidency, however, was not equal to that of the supreme government, and after actually sending to take possession of their new acquisitions, they became alarmed, and entered into a treaty with the Nizam, purchasing, so to speak, their grant and leaguing with him for their defence. This drew them into new hostilities with Hyder Ali, an obscure adventurer who in the confusion of the time had become sovereign of Mysore; and in the end that chief contrived to dissolve the alliance, and in August 1767, joining his forces with those of the Nizam, he commenced incursions into the Carnatic. This struggle was ended for a time by a decisive battle gained by the English; but, in 1769, Hyder, on his part, making his appearance suddenly before Madras, when the troops were far distant, extorted a treaty of peace from the fears of the English, which bound both parties to assist the other with troops in case of emergency.

But the English were now about to be plunged into a new struggle, and one of a most vexatious and unexpected kind. Although the war between them and the French had been terminated in India, it was requisite that the peace should be made in Europe; and, accordingly, by the treaty of Aix la Chapelle, it was arranged that the territorial acquisitions of the two nations should be mutually given up, and that the ostensible cause of quarrel should be removed by the legitimate sovereignty

of the French Soubahdar of the Deccan and the English Nabob of the Carnatic being acknowledged by both parties. This was sufficiently clear, but it afforded a pretext for the interference of the Crown with what the Company conceived to be their rights; and when Sir John Lindsay was sent out in command of some frigates "to give countenance and protection to the Company's settlements and affairs," he was empowered, by commission under the great seal, not only to see the conditions of the treaty of peace carried out, but to negotiate and conclude arrangements with the Indian sovereigns in general. This authority was conferred upon him without the Company having been consulted at all; and when the plenipotentiary arrived at Madras, great was the indignation of the president and council at finding themselves to all important intents superseded.

The disputes which this conflicting authority engendered were carried on with haughtiness on one side and obstinacy on the other; and Mahomed Ali was not long of perceiving that the Company was not exactly the omnipotent body he had taken them for, but really owned a superior. The consequence was, that Sir John Lindsay and the nabob formed one party, and the president and some of his council another, and that questions affecting the vital interests of both were debated with all the rancour of personal animosity. The local government at length gave way; and after supporting with their arms the nabob's pretensions in Tanjore and the Marawars, actually pressed forward with a zeal equal to his own to the wanton conquest of the former country, an independent Hindoo state. They besieged the capital, and on the 17th September, 1773, carried it by surprise, took the rajah and his family prisoners, and transferred the kingdom to the nabob.

The affair, however, was not to end here. The directors at home were indignant at so flagrant a breach of justice, in which their interest was not consulted to any very tempting extent; and they removed the president from his office, re-appointed Pigot (now Lord Pigot) in his stead, and gave orders for the immediate restoration of the deposed rajah. The struggle with the nabob of course re-commenced, who used threats, artifices, and entreaties by turns, to prevent a consummation which subverted the one grand project of his life. Some of the council sided with him, being bound to his interest by enormous debts; others took part with the rajah; and when Lord Pigot returned from executing the orders of the directors in person, he found a scene of anarchy which it is difficult to describe. His arrangement, however, had been so favourable for the Company — introducing a permanent British force into Tanjore, subsisted by a large annual grant—that there was no pretext for disagreement; but on the next occasion that admitted of a difference of opinion, the president was in a minority, and the rest of the council, constituting themselves the government, actually put him into confinement, where eventually he died.

We must now turn our attention for a time to events of equal importance that were in progress in Bengal; but in the first place it will be requisite to advert to the effect which the English career in India produced upon public opinion at home, and the reaction of that influence upon the constitution and fortunes of the Company.

The Company were now so well represented in Parliament that it was impossible for any interference in their affairs to take place without its giving rise to ample discussion; but in 1769, at the expiration of an enactment

restricting their dividends to ten per centum, they felt so much anxiety on the grand question, by that time publicly agitated,—the continuance of their Indian sovereignty,—that they preferred negotiating with the ministers for a temporary arrangement. It was determined, therefore, that they should hold the territorial revenues for five years longer, paying into the exchequer 400,000*l.* a year, or any smaller sum it might be requisite to fix upon so as to allow a dividend of ten per centum ; while they were at liberty to increase the dividend to the extent of twelve and a half per centum if the revenues permitted. A provision was also made for adding to the loans to government after the payment of their simple contract debts and the reduction of their funded debt. This shows that the nation were still agog after the "treasures of India." They must have known that the Indian presidencies were frequently unable to support their forces otherwise than by downright robbery ; and they might have considered, that a country which had just come through the protracted horrors attending the downfall of the Mahomedan empire could not well be rich. But neither information nor reflection was of any avail. They had seen individuals returning home loaded with wealth, and imagined that if the Company collectively only managed their affairs as well they would enjoy the same good fortune.

The directors on their part were not less unreasonable and the proprietors not less greedy. Despatch after despatch brought them intelligence of the poverty of their Indian governments, the increase of their debts, and the actual destitution of resources which stared them in the face; yet, with an extraordinary recklessness, they took advantage of the recent act to raise the dividends, and in August, 1772, they were compelled to intimate to

the minister the necessity of their being supported by a loan of at least one million. These financial difficulties brought their affairs to a crisis, and, in spite of their remonstrances, a radical change was made by Parliament in the constitution of the Company. The qualification of a proprietor to vote for the appointment of a director was raised from 500*l.* to 1,000*l.* Six of the directors were to go out of office annually. The government of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa was vested in a governor-general with a salary of 25,000*l.* a year, and four members of council with 8,000*l.* a year each; and this government was rendered supreme over the other presidencies. A high court of judicature was established at Calcutta, consisting of a chief-justice with 8,000*l.* a year, and three other judges, with 6,000*l.* a year, all appointed by the crown. The first governor-general and council were nominated by Parliament for five years; after which the appointment was to rest with the directors under approbation of the crown. The whole of the Company's political, civil, military, and revenue correspondence was to be laid before the ministry; the governor-general, councillors, and judges were excluded from commercial pursuits; and no person in the service either of the King or Company was to receive presents. The operation of such enactments as related to the home business had effect from the 1st of October, 1773, and those relating to the foreign from the 1st of August, 1774.

In the year 1772, the ambition of the Emperor Shah Alum to take possession of his ancestral throne at Delhi, gave rise to one of the most tragic events in the history of India, but one which has been so variously represented by various writers, that the truth can hardly be obtained. It will be remembered that the head of the Rohilla chiefs

held Delhi and the surrounding country ostensibly for the fallen government; and it was against him the emperor, in conjunction with the Mahrattas, who had been hovering over the adjoining provinces with three hundred thousand horse, and whom he had either called in, or who had come into the fray uncalled-for, directed his arms. The Rohilla was of course overwhelmed; but, after trying to obtain assistance from the Nabob of Oude, and in vain, although a treaty had been entered into for that purpose, he listened in desperation to overtures now made to him by the Mahrattas. These unscrupulous depredators turned round at once upon their late ally, and under pretext of seeking restitution and redress for the Rohillas, followed him to his capital and seized his person. They extorted from him a grant of the provinces of Korah and Allahabad, and then retired from the scene. Here were two provinces in the market, for no one seems to have thought for a moment of restoring them to the emperor: although, in point of fact, they were not delivered up at all to the Mahrattas, but after these freebooters had withdrawn placed under the protection of the English by the imperial deputy. The English, however, who were by this time the power which turned the scale in everything, made no scruple of selling their aid to secure them for the Nabob of Oude, nor afterwards of assisting that prince to crush the Rohillas, and take possession of their country. They even took advantage of the pretext of breach of faith on the part of the emperor, to deprive him of the twenty-six lakhs of rupees they had hitherto paid him out of the revenues of Bengal. The sole excuse for this conduct—if it can be called one—was pecuniary necessity. The dewannee had turned out a failure; new plans were only in progress for collecting the revenue in a more efficient manner; and, in the mean

time, it was necessary to live—it was necessary to keep up an expensive establishment—it was necessary to maintain themselves as the first military power in India, or sink into the position of banditti on that smaller scale which is neither safe nor respectable. The crime of the Rohillas was having thrown themselves upon the mercy of the Mahrattas in a moment of imminent peril; but when that was over, they had repudiated the forced connection, actually joined their forces to those of the Nabob and the English, and their country had in consequence been overrun with fire and sword by their late allies. Such were the circumstances under which the united forces of Oude and the English presidency entered the Rohilla territory, in January, 1774. On the 23rd a pitched battle decided the fortune of the war.

The Rohillas, driven to desperation, exhibited the most heroical valour. Many of their chiefs, as the musketry roared, and the fiery rockets hissed through the air, advanced alone, in a chivalrous spirit which would have been recorded with admiration by Froissart, and pitched their colours between the two armies to encourage their men to follow. But all was unavailing. The deadly fire of the Europeans carried the day; and the nabob, who had held back during the fight, followed like a jackal after the lion and devoured the prey. It has been sought by the defenders of Hastings, then the Governor-General, to palliate the horrors that followed, but the official letters on the subject are distinct. A part of the population were butchered in cold blood; a part fled from the devoted country; and the rest, wherever the devastation had spread, remained cowering in terror or despair amidst the smoking ruins of their huts and villages.

The supreme power recently conferred upon the Government of Bengal now brought them into collision with

that of Bombay; and at any rate the affairs of the latter presidency assumed at this time sufficient importance to entitle them to be noticed in an abstract of history. The nominal sovereign of the Mahrattas resided, in the character of a state puppet, at Sattarah, but the real centre of power was the council, by which, as we have seen, the ancient laws of the Hindoos surrounded their princes. The president of this council, called the Peshwa, was, according to usage, a Brahmin; and, by a not less regular custom, he had succeeded in usurping the chief power of the state, and rendering his office hereditary in his family. His court was at Poonah, and he was as much the king of the Mahrattas, as any one could be said to be of such a congeries of banditti. At present, however, there was a disputed succession; the council was divided against its head; and the Bombay government, in order to obtain possession of Salsette and Bassein, which they with great reason coveted, sided with the latter.

In 1778, the arrival of a French ship, and the reception given by the Mahratta council to a French mission added bitterness to the disputes; and at length a British expedition was sent against Poonah for the ostensible purpose of backing their ally, the Peshwa Ragoba. The army, consisting of four thousand five hundred troops, arrived within sixteen miles of their destination; and then, finding for the first time an army to oppose them, and being without horse to protect their baggage, and with only eighteen days' provisions, they commenced their retreat with as little judgment as they had advanced. They were pursued by the enemy, who eventually dictated a treaty, by which Ragoba was given up to their mercy, all recent acquisitions of the invaders restored, and two English hostages placed in their hands. Ragoba, however, soon after made his escape and rejoined the English

at Surat; and the treaty being repudiated by the Supreme Government, the war was renewed, and the Bombay army being recruited from Bengal and Madras, the campaign terminated in the English extending their possessions to some distance along the coast and in the direction of Poonah.

The position of the English in India, it will be noted, was by this time entirely changed. They had at first been store-keepers on the coasts of the Peninsula and Bengal; then zemindars, or landholders, at Calcutta; and in the Carnatic possessors of territory in jaghire, or recallable gift, from the sovereign. They had subsequently become dewan for the eastern provinces, with all the powers of government which belonged to the collection of the revenue, and paying into the imperial treasury a fixed sum out of the amount. Now in the supreme presidency they were masters, without even the affectation of allegiance to the Mogul; in the Carnatic the nominal prince was a tool in their hands; and on the western coast, while interfering in the Mahratta disputes as a pretext for war, they were in reality conquering territory as an independent power.

In 1778, intelligence reached India of a new war between France and England; but this was no longer a circumstance of any importance. One by one the French posts fell before the English arms, and Pondicherry was a second time taken and dismantled. The capture of Mahè, however,—their last little settlement—had important consequences; for, being in some degree under the protection of the ruler of Mysore, it filled the measure of that prince's resentment, already provoked by the breach of treaties. His troops were in fact officered by Frenchmen, who, doubtless, added their wrath to his; and the result was, that Hyder entered into a league with the

Mahrattas and the Nizam, and in July, 1780, invaded the Carnatic at the head of an army of a hundred thousand men, comprising twenty thousand infantry in regular battalions mostly commanded by Europeans, thirty thousand cavalry, one hundred pieces of cannon managed by Europeans, and a small body of Frenchmen.

After devastating a great part of the province, Hyder appeared, with the main body of his army, before Arcot the capital on the 20th of August; while a detachment of his troops was ready to fall upon the southern Circars, and the northern were threatened by the Mahrattas from Berar. On the Malabar coast he had united some of his forces with those of the Nairs, and the British possessions throughout the whole of the Peninsula were thus in danger at the same moment; while it was understood that a naval and military armament from France might be expected immediately. In the mean time the treasury of the presidency was empty; the troops of the nabob were deserting every day for want of pay; and the only other resource, the Rajah of Tanjore, had been reduced to absolute indigence by the arms of the one, and the tyrannous exactions of the other. The available army of Madras amounted to five thousand two hundred and nine men, comprising one thousand four hundred and eighty-one European infantry, two hundred and ninety-four artillery, three thousand four hundred and thirty-four sepoys, thirty-two field pieces, four heavy cannon, and five mortars; and Colonel Baillie, with a detachment of one hundred and fifty Europeans and two thousand sepoys, was called in from Guntoor.

The camp was determined to be formed at Conjeveram, and thither Hyder, with his son Tippoo, hastened to meet the British. Colonel Baillie's detachment in vain attempted to join, although recruited by a force from the

main body. The whole might of the Hindoo army was brought against them, and on the 9th of September, after performing prodigies of valour, in which sepoys and Europeans distinguished themselves alike, they were either cut to pieces or taken prisoner to a man. Their devoted gallantry, in all probability, saved Madras, for Hyder, instead of following the main body of the army, which immediately commenced its retreat, proceeded to renew the siege of Arcot.

Sir Eyre Coote at length arrived with reinforcements from Bengal, but the whole army amounted only to seven thousand men, of whom no more than one thousand seven hundred were Europeans. This little force, however, offered battle, and in vain, to the immense army of Hyder till the 1st of July, when the Sultan abandoned his usual tactics and met the English in the field on their road to Cuddalore. He was defeated, and retired in confusion to concentrate his forces upon Arcot. In some other actions of less note the English, even when successful, suffered so severely that on retiring into cantonments for the rainy season they had lost one-third of their little army.

On the 22nd of June, 1781, Lord Macartney arrived at Madras as governor and president at Fort St. George; and after in vain attempting, both with Hyder and the Mahrattas, to negotiate peace, he sent an expedition against Negapatam, the fall of which was followed by that of the other Dutch possessions both on the coast and in Ceylon.

In the following February an English fleet landed one thousand men at Calicut, and a French fleet two thousand men at Porto Novo. On the 12th of April an indecisive engagement took place between the two fleets; and a very gallant one, but without important results, on

the 31st of August. The intelligence had previously arrived of a separate treaty of peace having been made by the Supreme Government of Bengal with the Mahrattas; but Hyder, after amusing the English for a time, persevered in the war, till Madras experienced all the horrors of famine; and Sir Eyre Coote having sailed for Bengal in bad health, General Stuart succeeded to the command of the army with provisions only for a few days, and with pay six months in arrears. Tippoo, the son and successor of Hyder, was speedily at the head of his army, and took the field in December with nine hundred Europeans, two hundred and fifty Topasses, two thousand French sepoys, and many scores of thousands of Mysoreans; while the force which the British had now to oppose to him amounted only to two thousand nine hundred and forty-five Europeans and eleven thousand five hundred and forty-five Indians. Tippoo, however, was recalled into Mysore by the successes of the English reinforcement which had landed at Calicut, and after he had recaptured their acquisitions and forced them to surrender, the news of peace between France and England detached his French allies; and on the 11th March, 1784, he himself signed a treaty with the English drawn up on the principle of mutual restoration of conquests.

CHAPTER III.

FROM 1784 TO THE END OF THE MAHRATTA WAR IN 1805.

On the Bombay side the Mahratta war was recommenced by the English in 1781 with some spirit, but only partial success. The Supreme Government was desirous of peace, and sent the terms they proposed to the Nizam, the Peshwa, Sindia, and the Poonah ministers; but still they were desirous that hostilities should not be relaxed till an answer was obtained. The army accordingly advanced to the reduction of Bassein, which they forced to yield at discretion, and marched up the ghauts towards the Mahratta capital. Here they received a definitive answer declining the proposals,—for, in fact, a confederacy was at that moment negotiating among all the principal powers both of the Deccan and Central India against the English; and finding their position untenable, they marched back again, harassed by the Mahratta troops hanging on their rear.

On the Bengal side of the Mahrattas, also, the contest was carried on and with better effect. The principal Mahratta powers in Central India were the Gaekwars in Guzerat, who, being adherents of Ragoba, were for the present allies of the English; to the eastward of his territory, Holkar; more eastward still the Rajah of Berar; and, extending to the north and north-east, the dominions of Sindia. In 1780 the war had been carried into Sindia's country by Captain Popham, who performed, with a very small force, the magnificent exploit of capturing the fortress of Gwalior; and now a feat as remarkable saved the British force when in utter extremity, hemmed in on all sides, and their supplies cut off by a large army. This was the surprise of Sindia's camp in the nighttime, terminating in the flight of the enemy and the capture of guns, elephants, and ammunition. Still, the English troops, although able to maintain their position, were too few to follow up this success, or even to intimidate Holkar, the neighbour of Sindia on the Bombay side, from marching against that presidency; but the want of supplies was severely felt by their opponents as well as themselves, and this eventually led to a treaty of peace. This treaty with Sindia paved the way for a general peace with the Mahrattas, on the 17th of May, 1781, negotiated by the Bengal government on very humiliating terms for the English, who agreed to give up all their conquests, even Baroach and Bassein.

A singular circumstance now occurred which exhibits the prodigious pitch of audacity at which the English had arrived. A tribute had been imposed upon a native prince, the Rajah of Benares, a large and important dependency of Oude, the legality of which was disputed and its payment delayed. It was nothing new that the

Bengal government, in desperation for want of funds, and the pay of the troops many months in arrear, should insist upon having the money, right or wrong; but instead of sending, as usual, an army to collect it, Hastings, the Governor-General, thought fit to proceed in person to the ancient and populous capital, as it may be termed, of the Hindoo religion, with a few hundred troops more for a retinue than protection, and there he very coolly put the prince under arrest. The consequence was that the citizens rose up like one man, and massacred at a blow two companies of sepoys who guarded the prisoner; while Mr. Hastings, under cover of the night, made his retreat to Chunar. The end of this affair was that the rajah was deposed, and his successor reduced to a state of absolute subserviency to the Company. Hastings, however, gained nothing but odium by the adventure, for the treasure found, amounting to a considerable sum, notwithstanding his remonstrances, was confiscated by the troops, both officers and men, for their own behoof.

It is only necessary to mention here that a change was introduced into the constitution of the East India Company in 1784, including the establishment of a Board of Control. Such alterations, together with the alleged crimes of Hastings, and the various disputes of the presidential governments, will be alluded to more specially in another place, the present being a Book of action, in which it is attempted to track the movement of British power in India.

It has been seen that the English owed their advancement in eastern India to the divisions among the native princes, and their utter inability to depend upon the aid of each other; and in the south this fatal disorganization was still more obvious. The Mahomedan Nizam, for-

merly a viceroy of the Mogul government, was then in the midst of two powers, the Mahrattas on one hand and the Prince of Mysore on the other, who were also irreconcilable enemies of each other; while the English, on the east at Madras and on the west at Bombay, were ready to fling their weight into whichever scale their own interest might dictate. The Mahrattas had felt too frequently the arms of these formidable strangers to plume themselves too much even on the late treaty; the Nizam depended mainly upon them for protection from the two other powers; and Tippoo alone, conscious of his own resources, and his dominions stretching almost to the extremity of the Peninsula, pursued his own schemes without fear or hesitation. His proceedings among the little states to the south of his dominions were not long in exciting the displeasure of the English; and the war which the Supreme Government determined upon waging was only delayed for a time by the pacific policy of the President of Madras. All things at length were ready. An alliance against Mysore was formed with little difficulty by the English with the Nizam and the Mahrattas; and, in 1790, the Madras army, with hardly any opposition, forced a chain of posts within the enemy's country, and thus concentrated itself at Coimbatore. All the gains, however, were immediately lost, and the campaign closed without effect; although, on the other side of the Peninsula, the Bombay forces took possession without difficulty of the whole of Tippoo's possessions on the Malabar coast.

The next campaign was undertaken by the Governor-General, Lord Cornwallis, in person, and it was signalized almost at the outset by the gallant capture of Bangalore on the 21st of March, 1791. It was then intended to proceed to the siege of Seringapatam, the capital of

Mysore, and the Bombay general, Abercromby, was ordered to join his force for the purpose. The junction, however, was not effected, although both armies had approached to within a short distance of the place of attack. The total failure of carriage and every other appliance necessary for war, compelled Cornwallis to fall back upon Bangalore.

The Nizam's forces, in the mean time, had done something, although not much, to show that he was in earnest; the Mahrattas, under one of the Poonah chiefs, had wrested a valuable country from Tippoo; and the English army, receiving an abundant store of supplies and money from Madras, commenced a series of operations in the autumn of 1791, which, although forming merely a line of communication for the ultimate business of the war, contributed greatly to its success by raising still higher the character of the nation for the most daring valour. The posts of the enemy they attacked were perched on those mountain rocks which form the fortresses of the Indian chiefs, and where the fortifications of men seem merely a completion of the defences of nature. One of these, Savendroog, or the Fort of Death, rising grimly amidst a congeries of hills and noxious woods, expired so pestilential a breath against its enemies, that Tippoo chuckled with savage joy when he heard of the siege, at which one half, he said, of the English army would be destroyed by sickness and the other by the sword. A breach, however, was made in the walls in three days, and the storming party, scrambling up the dreadful rock, poured upon the point of attack, while the band of the 52nd regiment below played "*Britons, strike home!*" Success was doubtful for a moment, as the garrison swarmed down to drive the invaders over the precipice; but nothing could withstand the impetus of the latter. They

entered barrier after barrier, side by side with its defenders, some of whom fled, some died in harness, and some were driven over the perpendicular rocks.

The siege of Seringapatam, however, was at once the principal and the closing event of the war; and Lord Cornwallis is allowed by military authorities to have exhibited consummate skill in his arrangements for this undertaking. The fortress is situated in the western angle of an island in the Cavery, about four miles long and a mile and a half broad; and on the north side of the river, between it and the strong and prickly hedge which, as is usual in India, formed the outer and distant rampart, Tippoo lay encamped, with five thousand cavalry and fifty thousand infantry. This enclosure, besides its natural strength, was defended by six large redoubts, and a numerous field train of artillery; while beyond it the island with its redoubts, batteries, and entrenchments, and beyond that again the fortress, offered, it might seem, a secure retreat for the army if beaten from the outworks. The Madras army was alone in the attack (although the forces of the Nizam and those of one of the Mahratta chiefs were close in the rear), for the Bombay troops could not join in time. In the night of the 6th of February, 1792, the Mysore lines were stormed in three columns, and carried after a determined resistance; the centre column under Lord Cornwallis in person penetrating into the island. On the 8th the enemy were all driven into the fort; on the 16th the Bombay army joined; and on the 24th, to the great disappointment of the troops, it was announced that a treaty of peace was concluded with Tippoo. The terms were, that he should cede one half of his territories to the allies, pay three crores and thirty lakhs of rupees, and give up his three eldest sons as hostages.

It is pleasant to pause for an instant in this headlong narrative of blood, to note that the pain felt in the harem on parting with the two youngest boys, of eight and ten years of age, occasioned some delay. When at length the guard of honour which attended them had arrived at Lord Cornwallis's tent, and the hostages descended from the elephants, the British chief was told by the head vakeel in presenting them, that "they must now look up to him as a father;" and when his lordship answered kindly, the sudden brightness which rose into the faces of the boys, in the midst of the grave dignity of oriental decorum, moved with compassion even spectators whose hands were yet moist with blood.

This victory may serve to mark the period when the conquest of India was no longer the business of a company of merchants, sometimes assisted by the Goverment with troops, and sometimes left to their own resources. The British Crown had now virtually taken up the game; its own officer was at the head of the Indian dominions; and while stimulating the Company to go on in its career even to the verge of bankruptcy, it assisted them with funds when these were absolutely necessary.

After the peace with Tippoo, the Mahrattas were not long of pouncing upon their late ally, the Nizam; and the system of that extraordinary people never suffered them to be at any loss for a pretext for war. When they first rose up against the Mogul government, in the combined character of freebooters and insurgents, they were in the habit of imposing a chout upon all the countries they spared, and this came to be fixed at one-fourth part of the revenue. The chout, however, was rarely paid, except when collected by an army, and even then it was easy to disagree and fight about the amount. The Nizam had been a defaulter for some years, and he

probably flattered himself that, by means of his European alliance, he might get rid of the tax altogether; but, when threatened by the Mahrattas, the English, who were now governed by the pacific policy of Sir John Shore, refused to interfere, and the consequence was a brief war, from which he escaped only by acknowledging his former debts, incurring new ones, and giving up both money and territory to a considerable amount. This sickened the Nizam of the British alliance; he sent away their troops who lived upon him in peace and would not aid him in war; and he increased his standing force, commanded by French officers, to an extent which excited the jealousy of the government of Madras. Such conduct was the more irritating, as his debt to the English was growing heavier every day, and from his tyranny and misgovernment every day more hopeless. Even at this comparatively early period of our Indian domination, the cruelty and impolicy were manifest of our interference with native governments in any way short of entire subversion. Both the Carnatic and Oude were ruined by our support of the Prince; for our alliance was with him, not with the People, and exactions, which before were limited by his fears, now became as unbounded as the united power of himself and his European allies. Of Oude a disputed succession gave the English more hold than ever; and in the beginning of 1798 a new nabob was appointed by their influence, who paid dearly both in purse and liberty for his elevation.

The Nizam's affairs were bettered for a time by a disputed succession at Poonah, some of the Mahratta chiefs thinking it expedient to court his favour,—but when fears of a new war with Tippoo induced the English to insist upon his choosing between the French

and them, he did not hesitate to abandon his officers, who were arrested and delivered up to their rivals. Tippoo was understood to be negotiating with France, and as the European war between that country and England was now at its height, the Governor-General was proportionably alarmed. The Mysorean sultan, however, would plead guilty to no hostile intentions; and after demanding in vain the surrender of his French officers, the cession of his maritime coast, and various other submissions, the English at length determined upon taking the initiative in a war which they felt or feigned to be inevitable, and marched against this ruined prince, so lately despoiled of half his dominions, the most complete and powerful army they had ever yet sent to the field in India.

At Velore the forces mustered at least thirty-three thousand men, including four thousand three hundred and eighty-one Europeans, two thousand six hundred and thirty-five cavalry, and the whole of the British detachment serving with the Nizam, six thousand five hundred strong. At Cannanore, on the western coast, the troops numbered six thousand four hundred and twenty, including one thousand six hundred and seventeen Europeans; and a considerable additional force was ordered to join the commander-in-chief from the southern Carnatic and Mysore. Tippoo endeavoured to stop the march of the Bombay detachment under General Stewart, but without success; and he then hastened to encounter the main body of the army, and sustained a signal defeat at Malvilly, on the 27th of March, 1799. His purpose now was to hang upon their rear on their further march to Seringapatam, and watch a favourable opportunity for engaging. But he was again disappointed. The British army crossed the Cavery at Sosilla,

while Tippoo was looking for them in another direction. The unfortunate prince was disheartened by these repeated disasters; he received the last as an omen of his fate; and he and his friends proceeded to the capital, not hoping for life, but determined to die, and bathed in tears. Nor was the presentiment vain. The siege of Seringapatam was commenced, and notwithstanding some vain attempts at negotiation made by the Sultan, the united army (for the Bombay forces had now joined), succeeded in effecting an imperfect breach on the western angle of the fort, and on the 4th of May the assault took place. The time chosen was the heat of the day; and the men issuing from the trenches at an hour when both war and business are suspended in all intertropical countries, moved under a tremendous fire through the wide and rocky river, and stormed the hardly practicable breach in the face of a host of enemies.

The British flag was soon planted on the summit of the breach; but the daring adventurers had yet a deep ditch to cross between the outer and inner ramparts, and every inch of their way was disputed by the garrison, among whom the prince fought and fired like a common soldier. The Mysoreans at length broke and fled; a portion of the assailants gained the inner fort; and Tippoo, in attempting to enter, was entangled among a crowd of fugitives from within and without who blocked up the gateway, and brought down by a chance shot. A British soldier, in passing, clutched his glittering sword-belt, and the Sultan, writhing up, made a cut at him with his sword, whereupon the man shot him dead upon the spot. Thus fell a prince to whom, under more favourable circumstances, might have been awarded the praises of History. His dominions, at their late partition, were found in a better condition than any state in India, not

excepting the Company's possessions. Severe even to cruelty, he was yet beloved to enthusiasm by his friends and dependents; and his personal courage was only neutralized by the sloth, luxury, and blind favouritism which in so many cases prove the destruction of an eastern tyrant.

The enormous wealth attributed to Tippoo was found to amount only to 640,000*l.* in money, and 360,000*l.* in jewels, which was distributed to the conquering army. His remaining dominions were unequally apportioned among the three allied powers, so as to leave the English an uninterrupted territory from the Company's possessions on the western coast to those on the Malabar coast, and to place in their hands Seringapatam and other places of strength. But in order to preserve appearances, a portion of Mysore Proper was reserved as a rajahship for a descendant of the ancient kings of the country; although care was taken that this new state should be firmly wedded to the *protection* of the Company, and surrounded by their dominions. Having settled this point satisfactorily, the English entered into a still firmer alliance with the Nizam, whose country served as a barrier between them and the Mahrattas; and actually contrived to obtain from him, in lieu of a subsidy for the maintenance of troops, the whole of his share of the Mysorean territory whether acquired now or by the partition of 1792. They offered an alliance, also, to the Peshwa; but that prince, so far from accepting it, declined receiving the share allotted to him of Tippoo's spoil, which was accordingly divided between them and the Nizam.

The eastern presidency continued still to be disturbed by the affairs of Oude. In 1799 the unsuccessful candidate for the throne, who lived at Benares, under a sort

of honourable surveillance, one day in a transport of passion made a blow with his sword at the British resident, and his attendants therefore murdered that gentleman and several others. The ex-vizier fled, and mustered an army of several thousand men; but after some partial conflicts with the British he was betrayed into their hands—the old story!—by a native prince. This outbreak occasioned so much alarm in Oude that the Governor-General thought it a favourable opportunity for obtaining a further share of power in that state, by the institution of an increased and permanent British force. The reigning nabob, however, was restive; and it was determined, since no treaty could be obtained, simply to send the troops and demand the subsidy; when the prince suddenly announced his intention of resigning the cares of government. This was all the governor wanted, and more than he had hoped; but a trifling misconception arose between the two parties,—the nabob intending to resign in favour of his son, and the governor urging that it was his duty to resign in favour of the Company! In vain the prince reminded his Protector that the crown had been in his family for a hundred years; and at length when he found remonstrance was of no avail, he gave up the idea of resignation, disbanded his own troops, received those of the English instead, and paid slowly and grudgingly the subsidy. This slowness was inconvenient. The collection of the necessary revenue must no longer be left in the uncertainty inseparable from its remaining in such incompetent hands; and it was considered fitting that the nabob should make a cession of nearly two-thirds of his dominions, so that the sum might be collected by those for whom it was destined. The struggles of the royal puppet were unavailing; and when he endeavoured to stipulate for

the independent government of the remaining part of the territory, he was told distinctly that it must be under the military government of the English, as well as the rest. His last stipulation, and the only one agreed to, was, that he might be permitted to revert to the plan of resignation, place his son on the mock musnud, and set out himself on a pilgrimage, so that he might not be subjected to the shame of showing his face to the people.

There is no doubt that before these arbitrary proceedings were resorted to the country was in a state of absolute ruin, and we have already explained the cause—the interference of the British by their selfish but singularly impolitic treaties; a cause which remains in full operation in various other parts of India up to the present day. It may be urged in favour of Lord Wellesley, who was then the Governor-General, that he did not make but find the connection which existed with Oude; and that it was above all things his duty, even for the sake of the dependent states themselves, to strengthen the hands of the English against the formidable power of the Mahrattas.

At this time (in the year 1802) the Nabob of Furruckabad, a small state on the north-western frontier of Oude, and dependent upon it, was deposed on a similar principle, although with a different pretext, and his dominions taken possession of by the English. These proceedings gave rise to some insubordination among the zemindars, who were duly punished by a military force.

In 1800 the Nabob of Surat, who had fallen into arrears with the English, was deposed with so little trouble or ceremony that it is unnecessary to dwell upon the circumstance here; and in the following year the Rajah of Tanjore shared the same fate. The Nabob of

Arcot had been so long the creature of their sufferance that the only wonder is his having been allowed so long to enjoy and mismanage the powers of government. His time, however, was now come; and it so happened that the life of the individual then holding the dignity was cut short by disease, at nearly the same moment when he was deposed from the sovereignty.

It will perhaps be sufficiently clear to the intelligent reader, without further illustration, that these and other similar measures of the English are quite unsusceptible of defence, except on the score of political necessity. Having once been forced into collision with the native powers in Bengal, and seduced into it in the Peninsula by their rivalry with the French, they were no longer in a position to act upon abstract principles. Their progress may have been accelerated or retarded by the character of individual governors, but it was certain. In the convulsed state of India they could no more remain safely and steadily as the dewan of Bengal than as a zemindar under the nabob. Their single chance of existence was in the onward movement; and it is only to be lamented that since they were under this fatality, their motions, owing at once to the jealousies of the nation at home and their own deference to appearances, were throughout so indecisive and contradictory. To withdraw from a scene in which they found they could arrive at greatness only through blood and rapine would have been well; to determine to give peace to India by establishing on the ruins of the Mogul despotism a just and paternal government, would perhaps have been better; but to do, as was the plan they adopted, neither one nor other was to prolong the anarchy of the unhappy country, and throw around their own proceedings an air of repulsive selfishness.

At the beginning of the century, it had at length become their policy, as we have seen, with regard to a certain class of native potentates, to depose the sovereign from the exercise of every kind of authority, while retaining him in the character of a titled pensioner upon their bounty; but with another class they were satisfied with the military power, leaving the princes to mismanage the government and oppress the people as they thought proper. The Nizam was already in this state of mingled bondage and independence; and a civil war which now broke out among the Mahrattas seemed to offer a favourable opportunity for extending the system to the dominions both of the Peshwa and Sindia. The negotiation, however, failed; till Holkar, the belligerent chief, presented himself with a large army in the vicinity of Poonah, and was met by that of Sindia, ostensibly on the part of the Peshwa, but really on his own. The nominal head of the nation now saw clearly that whichever side gained he, without the assistance of the English, was lost; and he at once came into the plans of the Governor-General, subsidizing permanently a large British force, and ceding territory for its support. The treaty to this effect, which had important consequences, is known in history as the Treaty of Bassein, where it was eventually concluded. The battle was fought, and won by Holkar; and the Peshwa, flying to the fortress of Mhar, was held to have abdicated, and the conquering chief set up a new sovereign at Poonah and administered affairs in his name.

After some vain attempts to bring Sindia into the same kind of alliance, the English prepared to reinstate the Peshwa, and a considerable army was concentrated at Hurryhur, on the Mysore frontier, from which a large detachment, under the command of General Wellesley,

proceeding to Poonah conducted the prince in peaceful triumph into his capital on the 7th of May, 1803.

Sindia being still not only obdurate, but exhibiting evidences of a hostile alliance with the Rajah of Berar, war was now determined upon with the only formidable foes remaining, the Mahratta chiefs, and preparations were made upon a scale hitherto unattempted by the English in India. Its chief objects were to conquer the dominions of Sindia between the Ganges and Jumna; to obtain possession of the Mogul's person and his nominal authority, which still remained in the hands of the Mahratta chiefs since the Rohilla war; and to establish securely as subsidiary states the governments of the Nizam, the Peshwa, and Gaekwar.

The northern army, under General Lake, marched from Cawnpore on the 7th of August. Their first success was the capture of the fort of Alighur, under circumstances of difficulty which would have amounted to impossibility with any other than British troops. This place was the residence of Perron one of the French generals of Sindia; who in a few days after quitted the service in disgust, but without any circumstance of dishonour. On the 4th of September a French officer attacked five companies of English sepoys and compelled them to capitulate; but the next affair of importance was a field battle fought on the 11th near Delhi, in which the Mahrattas, commanded by a French general, were vanquished and put to flight. The result of this was, that in a few days after the general and some other officers of the same nation surrendered, and General Lake then waited upon the now aged emperor, Shah Alum, with many professions of *delivering* him from his foreign thrall,—professions which were shortly after fulfilled by making him the nominal sovereign of the city

and its environs, with a British resident as viceroy over him. On the 17th of September Agra capitulated; and on the 1st of November the battle of Laswarree completed the destruction of Sindia's army, and placed the whole of his Jumna territories in the hands of the English.

In the south General Wellesley was not less successful. On the 12th of August he captured the fort of Ahmednuggur, and on the 23rd of September fought the dreadful battle of Assaye, in which nearly one-half of his little army of four thousand five hundred men were either killed or wounded. A detachment under the command of Colonel Stephenson (which had not been able to join in time for the battle) captured Boorhampore and Asseerghur, the latter termed the Key of the Deccan; and joining the main body on the 29th of November, the united force attacked and vanquished the Mahrattas on the field of Argaum, and carried by storm the strong fortress of Gamilghur. With equal rapidity the English accomplished the minor objects of the war; taking possession of the province of Bundelkund ceded to them by the Peshwa, and of Cuttack which connected the Northern Circars with Bengal, and capturing Baroach and all Sindia's other territories in Guzerat. The Mahratta chiefs now saw that the war was hopeless, and gladly entered into a treaty of peace, securing their conquests to the English, and Sindia accepting a British force (but without subsidy) of six thousand men. The Governor-General had now twenty-four thousand troops distributed among the Peshwa, the Nizam, Sindia, the Gaekwar, and the Rana of Gohud; all except the six thousand we have mentioned maintained at the expense of these princes.

The power of the Mahratta chiefs being thus broken, it

was thought expedient to turn against another of them, Holkar, whose hostility to the English was not concealed although he had taken no part in the late war. An unfortunate circumstance, however, occurred at the commencement of the operations which rendered them more difficult than might have been expected. This was the imprudent advance of General Monson upon Holkar with a detachment apparently too weak for the service, and his equally imprudent retreat without making an attack upon the enemy, who would probably have been beaten (as had frequently happened before) by the very daring and desperation of the movement. He fell back, however, step by step from the fort of Hinglaiz Ghur, near the Chambul, to Agra, rallying every now and then and turning to bay, but his retreat sometimes resembling a flight; the robbers and hill-people disputing his passage in front, the Mahratta army pressing him in the rear, the rains flooding his march, hunger and the consciousness of defeat dispiriting his men, and sickness and fatigue uniting with the sword and the musket to thin their ranks.

Holkar now advanced with his whole army to within thirty miles of Agra, and Lord Lake assembling the forces under his own command, marched to attack him. The Mahratta, however, while attracting the attention of the English to his cavalry, detached secretly his infantry to Delhi, and that extensive city, garrisoned by only eight hundred men with eleven guns, found itself suddenly invested by an army twenty thousand strong and one hundred guns. On the 9th the assailants demolished a part of the ruinous fortifications, and were nearly effecting a breach, when a sally was made by two hundred of the gallant sepoys (of whom the garrison chiefly consisted), aided by some irregular infantry, who took possession of

the enemy's battery and spiked their guns. On the night of the 14th the Mahrattas, after having been beaten back at every quarter they attempted, vanished as suddenly as they had come.

On the 13th November, the battle of Deeg gave another great check to Holkar; and this was quickly followed by a destructive attack of the English upon his cavalry and the capture of the fort of Deeg, where his army had taken refuge. This place belonged to the Rajah of Bhurtpore, a Jat prince who, encouraged perhaps by the disastrous retreat of Monson, had joined Holkar. The town of Bhurtpore itself was next attempted, and with prodigious loss, but in vain; and Lord Lake, afraid of a tedious defence, listened to the proposals of the now repentant rajah and consented to a treaty of peace. Sindia, who had cheerfully leagued himself with the British against his rival Holkar, had subsequently complained of various breaches of the treaty, and showed plain symptoms of a desire to follow the Rajah of Bhurtpore in seceding from the alliance; but in the midst of the disputes incidental to this change of mind, and which were expected to terminate in war, the succession of Lord Cornwallis to the Marquis of Wellesley, as Governor-General, gave entirely a new aspect to the policy of the English in India.

The mission, both real and ostensible, of Lord Cornwallis was to counteract the effect of the war-councils of Lord Wellesley, whose proceedings had begun to alarm the people of England, and, by the accumulation of debt, to dishearten the Company. He had only time, however, to enunciate his views, which may be merely described as being the reverse of those of his predecessor, when he died on the 5th of October 1805; and Sir George Barlow, the senior member of the Supreme Council, succeeding,

according to the rules of the Company, and adhering to the previous councils, hastened before the close of the year to make peace with Sindia and Holkar, and abandon the protection of the minor states. The provisions of the treaty with Sindia very much resembled a bribe to that prince, while Holkar was secured in his own dominions; but with neither was there any word of an alliance far less of a subsidy.

CHAPTER IV.

FROM THE END OF THE MAHRATTA WAR IN 1805 TO THE FINAL SUBVERSION OF THE MAHRATTA POWERS.

There might have been little, perhaps, to choose between the Wellesley and Cornwallis plans—that of entering into alliances with the princes against the people, and that of leaving both alone—had it not been that the latter added to its disadvantages in theory the important one of impracticability. The condition of letting alone is for the party to be let alone. Lord Wellesley had at least the merit of seeing that in the existing position of the English in India to retrograde would be fatal, and to stand still impossible; although it is difficult to account for his entertaining the project throughout the late war of strengthening the hands and extending the dominions of the great Mahratta chiefs, by dividing the territories of Holkar among them. A glance at the map will give precision to our views as the narrative goes on. British India, with the exception of Travancore in the south of

the Peninsula, now occupied the whole seaboard from the delta of the Ganges inclusive to the Portuguese settlement of Goa on the western coast; and beyond this, surrounded by Mahratta territories, they held Bombay, Surat, and Baroach. Their more northern possessions were Bengal, Bahar, and the whole Doab, with the strip of territory on the west bank of the Jumna comprehending Agra, Mathura, and Delhi. The subsidized countries were Travancore, Mysore, and the dominions of the Nizam in the Deccan; the peninsula of Guzerat; and Oude, in the midst of the Gangetic territory. The rest of this vast country was still independent, from the Nizam's territories in the south to Bundelkund in the north, and from Cuttack on the Bay of Bengal in the east to the Indus in the west.

The first interruption of tranquillity after the Mahratta war was of a very extraordinary nature. It would appear that European prejudice against what the vulgar call "black blood" had not been dispelled even by the brotherhood in arms which had taken place between the two races; at least it would be difficult to account otherwise for the utter want of social intercourse between them. A conspiracy was on foot for a considerable time; predictions of the impending destruction of the English were publicly pronounced; actual revelations of the danger were made by one of its very agents; and yet no warning was taken, no knowledge was gained, and no suspicions awakened on the part of those whose lives were at stake. Regimental orders had been issued to the sipahis with the view of assimilating more nearly their appearance to that of European soldiers, and it was thought that they were merely sulky from this interference with their national customs. The idea never suggested itself that their reluctance had any connection with reli-

gion—that they might have supposed the enforced adoption of the dress of Christians to be meant only as a first step to their enforced conversion to Christianity; and no one dreamt that such feelings might be worked upon by political agitators till they led to a deep and desperate insurrection.

The scene was Vellore, an important fortress in the Deccan, assigned as a place of residence for the family of Tippoo; and here, early in the morning of the 10th of July 1806, the sipahis of the garrison, to the number of 1,500 men, issuing silently from their dormitories, led by their native officers, murdered at a blow the English sentinels, possessed themselves of the powder magazine, and commenced a terrific fire into the open doors and windows of the European barracks. Thirteen English officers, eighty-two privates, and seven conductors of ordnance, were killed, and ninety-one wounded, and the standard of Tippoo was hoisted on the flagstaff amidst the triumphant cheers of his countrymen. The fort was for some time in the possession of the insurgents; but with so little skill had their plans been laid, that it was retaken in a few minutes by a detachment of troops called in from Arcot, who revenged the death of their comrades by an indiscriminate massacre of between three and four hundred men. Three officers and fourteen non-commissioned officers and privates were afterwards executed, and the famous mutiny of Vellore was at an end.

The Earl of Minto became Governor-General in 1807, and although his policy was generally of a pacific character, he found it necessary to send troops at once on active service into Bundelkund. This province was on a small scale a type of India, and the tenure by which the English held it was of pretty nearly the same legality as that of their whole dominions; for the permission to

take it if they could had been granted by the Peshwa—to whom it did not belong. Here, as in some of the upper provinces, the system of bhoomeeawut prevailed, equivalent to the European right of private war in the middle ages; and petty chiefs were constantly traversing the country in all directions with fire and sword. During these contentions the land was always left fallow; for what was a point of necessity in the invaded territory was a point of honour in that of the invader: and as profit was, of course, the grand object of the English, it was necessary to put an end to a system so injurious to revenue. In the course of the operations commenced in 1808, numerous instances of individual daring occurred, and one instance of the Hindoo custom of immolating the females of the family rather than give them up; but in 1812 the fall of the strong fortress of Kalingur, supposed by the natives to be impregnable, intimidated them into submission.

The most important military interference, however, of Lord Minto with the princes of India was his resistance to an attempt of Runjeet Sing, the sovereign of Lahore, to extend his rule over the Sikh chiefs between the Sutlege and the Jumna. This able chief was not long of perceiving his inability to contend with the disciplined troops of Europe, and on the 25th of April 1809, a treaty was concluded which extended the supremacy of the English, with some trifling exceptions, to the banks of the Sutlege. After this they were accustomed in this part of the country to interfere as lords paramount on any question of importance; and they adopted the principle recognised in India of the appropriation, as such, of a subordinate territory in the event of a failure of lawful heirs.

The next military operations were of a less defensible character, being carried on against the Rajah of Travan-

core for the purpose of compelling him to pay the arrears of a tribute that had obviously been fixed at too high a rate. It was calculated not at the amount required for the defence of his own country but for the general defence of the British dominions against the French, who might have found a disembarking port in his territory. This question caused great irritation; and the violent measures afterwards taken by the English excited the rude inhabitants of the whole of that part of the coast to acts of fury not practised in civilized warfare; an example followed but too closely in the vengeance of their civilized conquerors.

An occurrence took place immediately after these events which threatened to deprive the Madras government of the means either of coercing others or of defending itself. After the Mahratta war it was considered necessary to make as many retrenchments as possible; and some of them, by depriving military officers of certain customary emoluments, gave deep offence to the army. The expression of this offence was indiscreet, but the conduct of the commander-in-chief still more so. Various officers were suspended, and some arrested; a large body of their brother officers memorialized the Governor in council for their restoration, as being necessary for the preservation of the country; and they afterwards proceeded to various overt acts of mutiny. The Government then taking the alarm made an appeal to the native troops, which, being properly responded to, had the effect of separating the men from their officers; and at length the garrison at Seringapatam seized the fort, and were in actual rebellion when some reinforcements they expected were routed by the troops sent against them with a loss of upwards of two hundred men. Divisions from other parts of the Deccan were already

on their march to join the mutineers, when fortunately the garrison of Seringapatam repented of their madness, and submitted unconditionally. A few of the offenders were selected for trial, of whom four were found guilty and cashiered, and one suspended by the Governor-General, although found not guilty by the court.

It happened fortunately that no disturbances in the country took place simultaneously with these transactions; but soon after, a foray on a large scale into Berar by the subjects of Holkar reminded the English somewhat awkwardly of their treaty with that prince (now a lunatic), which tied them up from interfering in his proceedings as regarded independent states. The balance of power in India, however, was not to be risked for any observance of etiquette, and bursting the bonds of the treaty without ceremony, they assisted to drive the spoilers out of the country.

The stream of the narrative now leads us to the eastern islands of India, and to a consideration of the state of the settlements of other European nations.

The Straits of Malacca and the eastern islands were at one time the grand depôts of India, and the entrepôts between that country and China. When the merchant-princes of Venice were in their pride of place, possessing collectively three thousand three hundred and forty-five vessels and thirty-six thousand seamen, Malacca was the principal emporium, receiving the gold and camphor of Borneo, the cloves and nutmegs of the Malacca and Banda islands, the sandal-wood of Timor, and the merchandize of almost every kind from Java, Siam, China, and other countries. It was the grand exchange of the markets of the further east and those of India, and of the western coast of the Indian Ocean. Calicut, Cambay, Ormuz, Aden, all traded largely with Malacca, as well

as with Ceylon for cinnamon and rubies, Bengal for piece goods, Narsingar for diamonds, and Pegu for rubies and lacker. The vessels from China, we are informed by Marco Polo, carried two hundred marines and five or six thousand loads of pepper.

Malacca was subdued by Albuquerque in 1506, and became, next to Goa, the principal settlement of the Portuguese, whence they extended their conquests and traffic among the islands of the Archipelago. Having already briefly related the fate of their dominion, we have only to say here that, at the epoch we have now reached they possessed only Goa, the ancient capital, and some small factories in the Gulf of Cambay.

The Spaniards traded with the islands so early as 1522, and in two years after established their settlement of Manilla; but it was not till 1764 that there was any direct trade between Spain and India.

The Danes established themselves at Tranquebar on the Coromandel coast in 1616, and at Chinsura in Bengal in 1755; the Netherlanders traded for ten years ending with 1734 with Bengal and China; the Swedes confined themselves to China; the Prussians made some attempts, which proved abortive, to establish a trade with Bengal in addition to their China trade; and in 1780 the Imperial Company of Trieste established three factories on the Malabar coast, but became bankrupt in five years. The French, as we have related, were by this time entirely uprooted from India; but their ships of war from Bourbon and Mauritius made such havoc occasionally among the English trading vessels, that at length, in 1810, an expedition was sent against these islands. Both were captured; and although Bourbon was restored at the peace, Mauritius remains a possession of Great Britain to this day.

The Dutch were now the only European nation in India whose settlements were incompatible with the safety of the Indian trade; and even these were so only by affording an asylum for French privateers as they cruised among the islands. In 1664 their power appears to have been at its height. They possessed Amboyna with its subordinate islands, which supplied the world with cloves; the Banda islands, famous for nutmegs and mace; Tarnati and the other Molacca islands; Maccassar and Manado; Batavia (the Dutch capital in the east) and other settlements in Java; three settlements in Sumatra; Malacca, with its dependent ports Tenasserim and Gundiansalang; two ports in Pegu; factories at Hooghly, Cassimbazar, Dacca, Patna, and other places in Bengal; Pulicat, Negapatam, Masulipatam, and other ports in the Coromandel coast; Cochin, Crangenore, Coulon, and Cananore; and a factory at Surat on the western coast, together with the island of Ceylon.

This extraordinary dominion began very soon to fall in pieces. In 1775 their trade was in a very declining state, and six years after, in a war with Great Britain, they lost Negapatam and numerous ships, and were almost reduced to ruin by these and similar disasters. In the war of the French revolution they lost for a time Malacca and the islands of Ceylon, Aboyna, Banda, &c.; but all these conquests were restored to them at the peace, with the exception of Ceylon. The English, however, were now determined to strike a final blow at the wrecks of their power, and thus remain themselves sole masters in the Indian seas.

A small expedition was fitted out from Madras against the Malacca islands, and Aboyna surrendered after a discreditable defence, one thousand three hundred Europeans laying down their arms to a third of their number.

The smaller islands of the group were speedily reduced, and two hundred soldiers and seamen landed upon Banda, although defended by two forts, heavy batteries, and a force of seven hundred regular troops besides militia. The storming party, after capturing a battery, made their way to Fort Belgica, marching in dead silence, and by means of their scaling ladders cleared the wall, and, without losing a man, put the garrison to flight. The fall of Ternati came next, under circumstances of greater difficulty; and in the following year the English directed their energies against Java.

The army under the command of Sir Samuel Auchmuty was landed within ten miles of Batavia on the 4th of August 1811, and marching upon that capital took possession of it without opposition. It was the intention of the Dutch to maintain themselves in Cornelis, a very strong position within eight miles of the city, till the rainy season should compel the invaders to retire; and as their troops numbered seventeen thousand against twelve thousand of the British, there was every probability in their favour. The advanced division, however, of the British army led the way from Batavia on the 10th, and defeating a division of the Dutch army at Weltervreden, the whole body marched direct upon Cornelis. They found the enemy in an entrenched camp within a circumference of five miles, defended by two hundred and eighty pieces of cannon, and flanked by two rivers, one on the east and one on the west. Their front, a space of six hundred yards, was difficult of access and defended, as well as their rear, by strong fortifications; while of the rivers one was unfordable, and its precipitous banks clothed with jungle, and the other being less impracticable by nature, was lined with batteries and redoubts.

After several days had been consumed in making regular approaches, which were rendered slow by the heavy fire of the enemy; it was at length determined to storm, and a simultaneous assault was ordered in front, in rear, and by the most practicable of the two rivers. The last-mentioned service was confided to Colonel Gillespie, with his rear division under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Macleod; and on the 26th, in the darkness of midnight, the column threaded its way through ravines and plantations, and by the first faint gleam of dawn discovered the enemy's videttes close at hand. The recognition was mutual, but the English did not return the fire of the Dutch; they rushed forward to the charge, carried the advanced redoubt, crossed the slight bridge with the flying enemy, and storming another redoubt, captured it at the point of the bayonet. The other two assaults had in the mean time operated as a diversion; but the complete success of Colonel Gillespie now opened a direct way into the enemy's lines, and the rest of the army came crowding from all quarters to the bridge, like birds of prey to some expected carnage. A terrible event occurred to light them to their quarry. The holy stillness of the dawn had been suddenly broken by the clash of arms, the roar of artillery, and that wild hurrah! so fatally known on the fields of India; and now the grey, cold, dimness of the hour was as suddenly illumined by a column of flame which rose up to the heavens. Some Dutch officers, in shame, fury, or despair, had fired a powder magazine attached to one of the captured redoubts, and the combatants on both sides paused for a moment in awe and consternation, as the whole scene was wrapped in an unearthly glare, flung back by their glittering arms and by the bloody surges of the river. But the pause lasted not

longer than the brief illumination. The work of death was immediately resumed; redoubt after redoubt was stormed and carried; the fort of Cornelis was captured; the enemy fled, and the fugitives were pursued and slaughtered for ten miles, the victors even searching the thickets for those whom the battle had spared. The English in this and the previous operations had nine hundred killed and wounded, of whom eighty-five were officers.

The Dutch general, Jansens, made several ineffectual attempts to withstand the further progress of the British; but at length, on the 16th of September, he signed a capitulation for the surrender of the island and its dependencies. The native princes were soon forced to recognize the authority of their new masters; and Mr. Raffles, now governor of Java, sent an expedition to Palembang in Sumatra, whose sultan was disposed to forget or repudiate his treaty with the late Dutch government. This chief was dethroned (according to the custom of the English on the continent of India), and his successor ceded the island of Banka to the king-makers. Under the new domination Java flourished. The tyranny of the Dutch—the most brutal of all modern colonists—was terminated, and the people, treated at length like human beings, began to breathe freely and to attach themselves heartily to their benefactors. But England was never consistent in her eastern policy. By the convention of 1814 with Holland, in the spirit of an unjust generosity, she restored Java and other colonies to the tender mercy of the Dutch—who had no leisure to think of them for two years after. Thus her good government was neutralized; thus the inhabitants were reduced, by the contrast, to still darker despair than before; and thus the blood spilt on the field of Cornelis, instead of

proving a sacrifice for the good of mankind, became an oblation to the infernal gods.

The Earl of Moira succeeded Lord Minto as Governor-General, and arrived in Calcutta in October, 1814. His attention was speedily called to the condition of the British frontier next to Nepaul, a native state occupying the tract of land lying between the plains of Hindostan and the high lands of Tartary and Thibet, and extending from the river Teesta on the east to the Sutlege on the west. The masters of this country were the Ghoorkas, a marauding people, who had hardly been known in India till the last moments of the empire, but who since then, by successive encroachments on their neighbours, had contrived to obtain an extensive territory. They did not grasp at sudden dominion, like the Mahrattas; they did not, like them, send their armies from one end of the country to the other; but year after year they continued to extend their frontier, and if they had not at length met on their way with such an occupant as the English, they might in process of time have advanced far into the plains of India.

From the conduct of the English in Bengal they had caught some useful hints, and armed and disciplined a body of troops after the European fashion, which they observed to be so effective in eastern warfare; but, nevertheless, they do not seem to have held their model in much awe, but continued to work on their way in spite of remonstrance into Hindostan. The British government had a great dislike to encounter an enemy whose country seemed to lie out of their path, and long after war would in any other case have been inevitable, continued to negotiate; till at length the Ghoorkas, not contented with spoliation, murdered some British troops stationed at an outpost in Goruckpore.

Before hostilities commenced a proposal was made to the English by the Nepaulese general to deliver up to them the whole country for a certain consideration; but this, although it was eagerly entertained by the Calcutta government, was only a stratagem employed *according to the tortuous policy,* say historians, of *all eastern nations.* To the policy of the English in inviting such overtures and benefiting by them, from the battle of Plassey downwards, they do not give a name.

It was resolved to invade Nepaul at four different points, and the army, therefore, was divided into four grand divisions. The first, under the command of General Marley, was to march against the capital, Katmandoo, and consisted of eight thousand troops and twenty-six pieces of cannon, with a subsidiary force of two thousand seven hundred men for the defence of the British frontier; the second, under General J. S. Wood, was to drive the Nepaulese out of the usurped lands, and consisted of nearly six thousand troops and fifteen pieces of ordnance; the third, under General Gillespie, was to penetrate into Ghurwal, and consisted of ten thousand five hundred troops, and twenty pieces of ordnance, with an attached force of six or seven thousand irregulars; and the fourth, under Colonel Ochterlony, was to encounter the western army of the Ghoorkas, supposed to contain the best of their troops, and consisted of seven thousand men and twenty-two pieces of ordnance, with four thousand five hundred irregulars attached. The numbers given show the greatest force of the army in the progress of operation; for at the commencement some of the divisions were not so strong.

In October, 1814, military operations were commenced, and in a most disastrous manner, by the division commanded by General Gillespie. It penetrated into a

valley on the western frontier, and marched to the storm of Kalungar, but was obliged to retire with a heavy loss. Another assault was tried, a second, and a third, but equally unavailing; the general himself falling in the last. Colonel Mawbey, who succeeded to the command, now made another attempt, with the assistance of a battering train; but after the storming party had actually gained the top of the breach, under cover of a heavy fire from the artillery, they were swept away instantaneously by the desperate Ghoorkas. On the 30th November, however, the brave garrison, compelled by want of provisions and water, as well as by their severe losses, evacuated the place, leaving no barrier against the English but ghastly heaps of slain. After some minor successes the English turned their force against the fort of Jyetuck, but were compelled to retire with great loss after fighting the whole day.

Colonel Ochterlony's division commenced operations under unfavourable auspices in another quarter of the same frontier; but by dint of perseverance and skilful manœuvring he at length out-generalled the enemy, captured several fortresses, and won over the Rajah of Belasore from his allegiance to Nepaul. General Wood's division made an unsuccessful attempt upon the fortress of Jutgurh, and succeeded in nothing but destroying the crops on the ground to cut off the enemy's supplies. General Marley did not reach the division he was appointed to command, and the object of which was to march upon the Nepaulese capital, till the 11th of December, previous to which time the troops had obtained possession in brilliant style of the Terraie of Sarun. This was all the division accomplished. General Marley was much blamed for his vacillation, and at length suspended; and one morning, before his suc-

cessor had arrived, the troops found themselves suddenly without a leader, the general having left the camp in the night. A body of irregular troops, under Colonel Gardiner, at length turned the fortune of the campaign; and Colonel Nicolls joining with two thousand of the regular army, the Nepaulese were driven out of the province of Kamaon, which was permanently annexed to the British dominions.

General Ochterlony, in the mean time, in the west, continued to fight when that was necessary, and to intrigue whenever it was possible; till, partly by the success of his arms and partly by the desertion of the Nepaulese troops, he succeeded in making a convention on tolerable terms. But the Governor-General was now feverishly impatient for peace. Negotiations were commenced—broken off—renewed; and it is a fact without parallel in the history of the British in India, that he would willingly have given up the whole point in dispute—the territories for the preservation of which an expensive and bloody war had been carried on—if the court of Katmandoo had not very luckily refused to ratify the treaty concluded by its own agent! A new campaign was brief, almost bloodless, yet decisive; and in February, 1816, General Ochterlony compelled the Nepaulese to enter into a treaty of peace, by which, in addition to some smaller advantages, the British acquired the provinces of Kamaon and Gurhwal.

Thus ended a disastrous and discreditable war, in which the English found themselves for the first time in conflict with well disciplined native troops, led by native officers, and learned to appreciate the importance of a regular Indian army in contradistinction to the rabble they had usually encountered. In this rabble it is true they had found instances of individual valour, and some-

times even of collective success; but the Ghoorkas were inspired from first to last with true military ardour, and met hand to hand the conquerors of the plains of Hindostan and the mountains of the Deccan with neither reluctance nor dismay.

The breathing time of the English was short. A quarrel between the Gaekwar and the Peshwa, signalized by the murder of the Guzerat minister, by the connivance of the latter, called for their interference; but although they succeeded in intimidating the Peshwa into a new and more stringent treaty, it was evident that he had determined to make an effort at the first promising opportunity to burst his bonds. This was found, or made, when the English were about to direct their energies against a new enemy, whom it has not as yet been found necessary to name in this abstract of history.

The appearance of the Pindarries on the scene is not a mystery, as has been frequently supposed, but the solution of one. In a vast country like India, which had remained in a state of chaos ever since the Mogul empire began to rend in pieces, the ruined villagers—the broken clans—the soldiers scattered in defeat—the adventurers and desperadoes of every kind, torn up from their places in society by the convulsions of the time, and thrown wildly upon the living tide,—all must before now have amounted to an aggregate number sufficient to confer a peculiar character upon the whole social mass. In Europe the same causes have produced confederations of robbers—for instance, in Germany, at the end of the Thirty Years' war; but in India, where everything is on a colossal scale, the successful robber becomes a prince, his den expands to a province, and men lose in the magnitude of his crimes the recollection of their origin. The Pindarries were nothing more than the outcasts and

vagabonds of the country, drawn together by the free-masonry of guilt, and uniting for mutual protection; and their roving bands were employed by the chiefs and princes as readily as these had called in the French and English to their broils. At first they were treated even by their employers with contempt; their character of illegality was an excuse for any treatment, and they were frequently robbed in turn by those whom they had assisted to rob. But as they increased in number and in strength, the smaller bands merging in the larger ones, and all, by the force of natural attraction, drawing into the mass the desperate and depraved around them, the Pindarries grew more respectable, received assignments of territory, and, in fine, became one of the military powers of Hindostan.

The character of robber, however, was never elevated with them into that of warrior. The Mahrattas—bandits on a larger scale—fought pitched battles, but the Pindarries merely plundered and fled. To the number of several thousands they made their appearance suddenly in a district remote from their head quarters, all well mounted, and armed with spears or matchlocks; and they were often accompanied by their women to gather in the plunder more completely, or assist by female quickness the ingenuity of torture. Their track was through blood and ashes, burning villages, and devastated fields; and their victims were men, women, and children, without distinction.

While preparations were making by the British for clearing the country of these formidable freebooters, who had made a foray into the Madras territory, their affairs with the Peshwa came to a crisis, and on the 6th of November, 1817, a British force of two thousand eight hundred men beat off twenty-five thousand Mahrattas, who

had plundered and burned the residency. The Peshwa's army made another stand with as little success, and the British took possession of Poonah without difficulty.

A negotiation was now opened with Sindia to secure his co-operation against the Pindarries; but in the midst of it he was detected in organizing a combination against the British with the Nepaulese. This brought the affair to a point; and Lord Hastings, now the Governor-General, having two large armies in the field, one called the army of Bengal, under his own command, and the other that of the Deccan, under the command of Sir Thomas Hislop, assumed such a position as gave him complete command of the movements of the Mahratta prince, whom on the 5th of November he forced into a treaty. Sindia was now bound, among other articles, to assist in the destruction of the Pindarries, and to admit British garrisons into his two principal forts.

Among the princes most strongly influenced by the intrigues of the Peshwa, was the rajah of Berar, with whom a subsidiary alliance had been concluded by the British; and the resident at the court of Nagpore was soon compelled to call in troops from Poonah. These amounted in all only to fourteen hundred men, while the Mahrattas numbered eight thousand infantry and twelve thousand cavalry, with thirty-five guns. The English posted themselves on a hill overlooking the city to watch the turn of events, and wait the instructions of the resident; and here, being attacked by the Nagpore troops without any declaration of war, they fought against the frightful odds we have mentioned one of the most remarkable engagements related in history. When they were driven up to the top of the hill by a charge of overwhelming numbers, and it seemed impossible that anything could save them, Captain Fitzgerald, with a de-

tachment of Bengal horse, and some troopers of the Madras body guard, dashed down into the plain, and after encountering and routing a host of cavalry, captured the Berar guns and turned them against their late owners. This gallant deed of arms changed the fortune of the day; and when cornet Smith at the head of a troop of horse charged round the base of the hill the enemy fled in all directions. The rajah now gave up the contest, and after various delays repaired to the residency; but his troops were still resolved to hold out, and it was only after some severe fighting that they were compelled to evacuate the city. The rajah, on proof of subsequent treachery, was deposed.

These successes kept the wavering Mahratta powers in awe, and as for the Pindarries they were fought and beaten whenever they were met with, although to little purpose. The troops of Holkar, however, were clamorous for employment; and at length they laid hold of the rajah's person (a minor), cut off the head of the regent, a young woman who had shown an inclination for British protection, and openly declared war. On the 21st of December, they were met in the valley in which the town of Midnapore stands, by the first and third divisions of the army of the Deccan under Sir John Malcolm and Sir Thomas Hislop; and after a gallant action, in which the British suffered severely, were completely defeated, leaving three thousand dead on the field.

The Peshwa, in the mean time, after the capture of Poonah, retreated at first to the southward, but being pursued by a division of the British army changed his direction till interrupted by another; and thus he continued to march and countermarch, always avoiding an action till, on the 1st of January, 1818, he met at the village of Corygaum with a detachment of nine hun-

dred men, with some artillery under Captain Staunton, whom he engaged and nearly cut to pieces without beating them. It was the Mahrattas on the contrary who retreated, and Captain Staunton entered the town of Seroor in the evening at the head of his surviving men with drums beating and colours flying. The Peshwa continued his flight till the 19th of February, when he was defeated at Ashtee by General Smith; the Rajah of Sattarah (the puppet-king of the Mahrattas) who was in the camp falling into the hands of the British. Sattarah and the various places of strength around Poonah were captured without difficulty.

The war was now drawing to a conclusion, and the circumstances attending its close entitle it to the name of a national struggle. It was not the princes who held out the longest but the troops; and in various instances, in the dominions of Sindia, Holkar, and the rajah of Berar, the forts surrendered by treaty were obliged to be captured by force of arms. At the storming of one of them, Talner, some circumstances of treachery occurred which irritated Sir Thomas Hislop so much that he caused the killadar to be hanged; and in the case of Mundella, the killadar was brought to a drum head court martial, and only escaped execution by its being shown that he had resisted in consequence of secret orders from his government. The important town of Chanda in Berar, was captured on the 20th April, and Malligaum in Candeish on the 18th of June.

The Peshwa still continued to fly; but his wanderings, as has been remarked by an officer present in the service, appeared to be confined within a magic circle which he found it impossible to overstep. His pursuers at length drew in their lines so closely around him that he lost all hope, and surrendered to General Malcolm, exclaiming,

"How can I resist more? I am surrounded! General Doveton is at Berhampore; you are at Metowla; Colonel Russell is at Borgham—I am enclosed!" Thus was the acting head of the confederacy—the sole bond of union among the Mahratta states—in the power of the Governor-General, and he wisely resolved to kill not scotch the serpent which had so long lived upon the life-blood of India. The Peshwa was deposed, although allowed an extravagant provision for his support, and his possessions were annexed to the British dominions, with the exception of Sattarah and a tract of territory around it, assigned to the rajah as nominal sovereign of the Mahrattas. No good reason can be discovered for this latter proceeding. The descendants of Sevajee had long been mere puppets in the hands of the Peshwas, and to build up a new Mahratta sovereignty, however circumscribed in territory and person, and thus give the nation an object on which to fix their eyes whether in hope or memory, was surely unwise in those who desired to be the pacificators of India. On the 9th of April, 1819, the fall of Asseerghur, one of Sindia's fortresses, held out in aid of the deposed rajah of Berar, terminated the Mahratta and Pindarrie war. The rajah himself escaped in the garb of a fakir, and taking refuge in Lahore, became a pensioner on Runjeet Sing.

The result of this conflict was to render the English nominally as well as virtually the paramount power in India. The Mahratta confederacy was now a mere shadow, and would have ceased to exist even in that character, but for the idle ceremony performed by the conquerors of re-establishing a Mahratta sovereignty. The Peshwa, the real head of the nation, had sunk from his kingly station into that of a private individual, and resided near Cawnpore, a pensioner on British bounty.

The rajah of Berar was a fugitive, and a minor ruled over a portion of his late territories, the remainder being annexed to the British dominions. Sindia was effectually crippled, and Holkar was despoiled of a portion of his subsidized possessions, and otherwise reduced to a humiliating state of dependence. The Pindarries, against whom the war had been originally undertaken, were destroyed. Dispersed in the field, driven from their territories wherever they possessed any, deprived of the countenance of the native princes, they fell in battle, fled into the jungle and there perished, or were slain singly by the villagers. Some few submitted and received lands for their maintenance; and others, doubtless, from bandits on a larger scale became dacoits and thieves.

CHAPTER V.

FROM THE END OF THE MAHRATTA AND PINDARRIE WAR TO THE TREATY FOR THE RESTORATION OF SHAH SOOJAH.

Lord Amherst, the successor of the Marquis of Hastings in the government, reached Calcutta in August, 1823, and speedily found his attention called to the hostile proceedings of a power on the eastern frontier.

In the beginning of the seventeenth century both the English and Dutch nations had settlements in various parts of the Burman dominions, but through the misconduct of the latter, all Europeans indiscriminately were banished. The English some years after were reinstated in the factories at Syriam and Ava, and the Madras government founded a settlement on the island of Negrais; but in the struggle for domination between the Burman and the Peguers these establishments were for a time destroyed. Being reinstated once more, the English and French took different sides as usual in the contest between

the native powers; but the former were guilty of singular treachery to the Burmans, whose cause they had affected to espouse, some of the Company's ships joining with the French in firing upon the Burman fleet when engaged in an action with that of Pegu. Notwithstanding this the Burman monarch listened complacently to a deputation of English who came to solicit permission to form settlements, and all was going on well when their countrymen were again guilty of the same unaccountable treachery. The prince having been victorious in Ava, advanced in his fleet of boats to the mouth of the Syriam stream, and seized a French ship, which was unmanageable from the lowness of the waters. He then captured the fort of Syriam by surprise, and took the Europeans prisoners; and having obtained possession by a clever ruse of another French vessel from the government of Pondicherry, he executed all her officers and the French resident of Syriam.

The English, notwithstanding their misconduct, were still treated with favour; and in 1757, the Company formally took possession of the island of Negrais, granted to them in perpetuity by the king. In two years after, however, the small British force was withdrawn to India, the exigence of affairs in the Carnatic requiring all the aid that could be mustered; and Burmese vengeance at length exploding, the persons left in charge, as well as the native labourers, were almost all massacred by the Burmans. The Company never made the slightest effort to extort restitution for this outrage, contenting themselves with a request for the restoration of the few prisoners that were taken; a pretty plain indication, it may be presumed, they could not sanction the conduct of their servants during the war.

The next transaction between the two governments was in 1797, when three leaders of banditti who, as was

alleged, were in the habit of conveying their booty across the frontier into the English province for sale, took refuge from the Burman laws in Chittagong. The emperor immediately marched a body of five thousand men into the Company's territories to demand the fugitives, to which it was replied that the complaint would be investigated if the Burman troops would withdraw, and this being complied with, the offenders were accordingly given up. In 1811 a dispute arose less easy to adjust. Arracan since the year 1784 had been a province of the empire, and a large body of refugees from the conquered country had sought an asylum in Chittagong, where associating themselves with insurgents from other parts of the country, they sallied every now and then into the Burman dominions. At length a movement of a more formidable nature was made by these adventurers, with the view of overturning the existing government of Arracan, and being beaten in the attempt they retired as usual into the English territory. This led to a requisition on the part of the Burman government that the British should deliver up the insurgents, which Lord Hastings asserted he could not do without violating "the principles of justice;" and thereupon the emperor declaring that the English had made their province a den of rebels against his government, demanded the cession of the whole territory as an ancient dependency of Arracan.

The Burmese, however, were for the present occupied with the conquest of Assam and other matters which prevented them from following up their demand by hostilities; and it was not till 1821 that they gave distinct indications of their intentions. The proximate cause of the war was their preparations to reconquer the province of Cachar, which they had rendered tributary in 1774; and although the threatened rajah was a usurper,

the English, who had previously endured insults and injuries with unusual patience, did not relish the idea of the emperor coming so close to their dominions. They marched a force, therefore, to the Sylhet frontier, and in 1824 the belligerents camé to blows in Cachar.

The war was thus commenced in the north by the spontaneous interference of the British on behalf of a prince with whom they were on no terms of alliance; but in the south the cause of quarrel, whether just or unjust, was of a more specific nature. The Burmese, indignant at the protection afforded in Chittagong to banditti and insurgents, seized and carried off some men whom they found elephant-hunting for the Company in their territory; and the British, in order to secure themselves from outrage, posted a small detachment of sepoys on a little sandy island called Shaporee, in the mouth of the Naf river, the boundary between the two states. The Burmese demanded the surrender of the island as their own, and it is hardly likely that the other party felt their claim to be very strong, as, when they were eventually driven out of it by force, and some of their sepoys slaughtered, they proposed a mutual commission of inquiry. When they had reoccupied the post, however, with a stronger force, and the Burmese affected that they would be satisfied with its being declared neutral ground, they refused to entertain any proposal which did not recognise the absolute and unqualified right of the Company to the island. They subsequently withdrew the detachment on account of the unhealthiness of the place, stationing a small schooner with some gun-boats off the north-east point to supply the place of a garrison; upon which the Burmese kidnapped the commander of the little armament (though detaining him only for two or three weeks), and planted their flag in triumph on the desolate

sand-bank which was the object of contention between the British nation and a country equal in magnitude to the German empire.

It appears improbable, however, that any concession of the English would have averted war, for the Burmese were in the full flush of conquest, and seem to have contemplated pushing the frontiers of their growing empire to the Ganges. The English, therefore, although perhaps too careless in affording pretexts to the haughtiest enemy they had yet measured swords with, may be considered to have acted at last in self defence; and they determined to give their dominions an effectual bulwark by emancipating the Assamese and other tribes of the north-east from the Burman yoke,—and to take the opportunity of adding to their own advantages by wresting from the enemy his possessions on the sea-board extending in a line with their own province of Chittagong.

An expedition composed of Bengal and Madras troops amounting to eleven thousand men, with a naval armament comprising the first steam-vessel ever employed in war, arrived at Rangoon on the 11th of April, 1824. Hardly any defence was attempted, and when the English landed they found the town empty, the inhabitants having fled to the jungles. After some minor successes, General Sir Archibald Campbell, who had the command of the expedition, penetrated a little way into the country, and attacked and carried two stockades which were bravely defended, the garrison within, after all was lost, fighting man to man till they were put to the bayonet. Major Dennie was one of the leaders of the assault on this occasion; and on the 3rd of June at an attack by escalade on another stockade ten feet high, the first man who gained the summit was Major Sale.

The army was now reinforced by the arrival of the second division from Madras, and the return of two detachments which had been sent on a successful expedition against the islands of Cheduba and Negrais. But the Burmese had taken care to sweep the country of every article that could minister to their sustenance; their encampments were flooded by deluges of rain; the sun flashed its perpendicular rays on their heads; and the deadly miasma of the jungle and the swamp spread pestilence in their ranks. Hungry, weary, sick even to death, they were surrounded by a thousand enemies, of whom those they had come to encounter were by far the least formidable.

On the 1st of July a large detachment of the enemy indulged them with an engagement, and were driven into the jungle; and on the 8th no fewer than ten stockades were carried in one day, most of them at the point of the bayonet without firing a gun, and all defended by numbers incomparably superior to those of the British. The principal work was composed of three stockades one within another, and in the centre one the Burmese general felt himself in such security that he did not think it necessary to rise from his dinner till he saw, to his utter astonishment, the invaders swarming over the defences by getting up on each other's shoulders! The war in this part of the country was now carried on chiefly by insulated detachments, which, although in some instances suffering severely, performed their appointed work with success.

Such, however, was not the fate of the invaders in Arracan. A detachment at Ramoo, under the command of Captain Norton, consisting of three hundred and fifty regular native infantry and nearly twice the number of provincial and irregular troops, were opposed to a Bur-

mese army of ten thousand fighting men. Under these fearful circumstances the irregular force could not be depended upon, but Captain Norton, being in expectation of reinforcements from Chittagong, determined upon defending his post. A river was on his right flank, and a tank in front and in rear; but the enemy made regular approaches, and in two days, being in possession of one of the tanks, there was no longer any hope, and Norton began his retreat in tolerable order. The pursuing cavalry, however, pressed in overwhelming force upon his little band. In vain he ordered his men to form square—they had been fighting without intermission for two days,—they were now sinking from fatigue as well as privation—and, yielding to the horror of their situation, they at length threw down their arms and fled. Of nine English officers six, including the gallant Norton himself, died on the unequal field.

The success of this division of the Burmese army rendered it of prodigious consequence at Court, and it was immediately marched from Arracan to encounter Sir Archibald Campbell at Kemendine, near Rangoon. It was first attempted to cut off the British post by surrounding it with entrenchments, and at the same time to destroy the shipping by fire-rafts; but on the 5th of December, Sir Archibald became the assailant, and after some days' fighting put the Burmese completely to the rout. Their scattered army, however, concentrated themselves at Kokeen, after setting fire to the town of Rangoon; and the British general, surrounded by native spies, his cantonments threatened every instant with conflagration, and the unseen enemy ready to rush upon him from the jungle at the first symptom of confusion, determined in sheer desperation to attempt, with a detachment of fifteen hundred men, the most formidable en-

trenched and stockaded works he had ever seen, defended by twenty thousand Burmese. The adventure, looked upon by the enemy with scornful curiosity rather than fear, was completely successful; and the British determined to advance with a portion of their army upon Prome, the second city of the empire. The expedition was composed of two columns, one proceeding by land and the other by water; the former commanded by Sir Archibald Campbell in person, and the latter by General Cotton. Before they reached Prome, however, the havoc committed by the flotilla column in advancing along the Irrawaddy, had struck terror into the hearts of the Burmese, and the English found the city, although surrounded by strong fortifications, deserted by the authorities.

The British troops in the north had been successful in driving the Burmese out of Assam, and all fears for the Bengal provinces being at an end, in January 1825, an army of eleven thousand men was organised for the conquest of Arracan. This was accomplished with little difficulty, the only struggle of any consequence taking place at the capital; and General Morison prepared to march his army across the mountains to join the troops of the Irrawaddy. But this was impossible. The rainy season set in; the miasma from the steaming ground was more fatal than the arms of the enemy; and after a fruitless struggle with disease, the British evacuated the country, only leaving garrisons on some of the islands.

This season was passed by Sir Archibald Campbell at Prome, and at its close he was surprised by the simultaneous approach of a Burmese army, and a deputation with a reply to overtures he had made some time before. The negotiations, however, failed, for the Burmese would give neither money nor territory, and the ques-

tion came once more to the arbitrament of battle. On the 1st of December, an engagement took place in which the English were victors; and the next day they attacked the Burmese centre which was strongly entrenched among hills, with the river on one side commanded by batteries, and elsewhere accessible only by a single narrow pathway defended by artillery. The heights were stormed and carried, the Burmese driven from hill to hill, and the British army continued its triumphant march.

A new attempt at negotiation was abortive, and Melloon, and then Pagahm fell before the British arms; at the latter place the Burmese having tried their fortune for the first time in the open field. The conflict was now at an end, for Sir Archibald Campbell in his advance upon the capital, was met by the ratification of the treaty proposed by himself, with a sum of money as the first instalment of the expenses of the war. The gains of the British besides a crore of rupees, were the withdrawal of the Burmese claims upon Assam, Cachar, and Jynteea, and the territories of Arracan, Yeh, Tavoy, Mergui, and Tennasserim.

We must now return to the internal affairs of India; and in the first place advert to an unhappy occurrence connected in some measure with the Burmese war. In the middle of 1824, the 47th Native Infantry were marched to Barrackpore, with the view of being sent thence to Rangoon; but by some strange oversight, no care was taken that the sepoys should be provided with the carriage cattle requisite for their baggage. On the contrary, they were told that no assistance could be rendered to them by the civil powers; and the peasantry, in whose favour this ill-timed forbearance was exercised, refused to lend their bullocks on hire.

Such carriage was necessary, in order to save the men from a fatigue not endurable under an inter-tropical sun; and the orders to march were therefore considered cruel and tyrannical. Their minds having once received this bias, their discontent extended itself to other circumstances of their condition, and in particular to that of their destination being a foreign country, the scene of frequent disasters to their Mogul princes, and now not less the object of their doubt and dread from the recent loss of the detachment at Ramoo.

On the 1st of November a parade took place at day-break, but the order to fall in was only partially attended to. General Dalzell proceeded to the front and repeated the command in a voice of thunder, but it was echoed by confused shouts and cries from the whole, while not a man stirred. Presently the decision of the mutineers was taken, and the ringing of ramrods along the line proclaimed that they were loading their muskets. The men who had fallen in now rejoined their comrades; and all, in the words of an eyewitness, "dashed forward in a body, drove off their officers, tore the knapsacks from the backs of the soldiers of the fifth company, established themselves on the parade fronting the lines, and having piled their arms, and planted a cordon of sentries round them, openly raised the standard of revolt."

During the day the mutineers were calm and determined, and they slept that night on their arms, maintaining guards and picquets and a chain of sentries and patroles. The next morning the earliest rays of light disclosed a large body of troops from Calcutta, followed by a battery of light artillery defiling into the plain. Slowly and silently this force emerged from the trees, their arms flashing in the level sun, till they halted within view of the mutineers, drawn up in square near a

tank in front of their lines, and showing a bold front and compact array of well-set men and bristling bayonets. "There were about one thousand four hundred men," continues the eye-witness, "with six stand of colours—the staff of one of these, minus the colour, which had been forcibly torn from it, I picked up on the spot where they had stood. A staff officer (Captain Macan) was now sent down to them with the commander-in-chief's ultimatum, which was, I have heard, to the effect that all just complaints should be heard and redressed, but that an unconditional submission must first take place, as it was impossible for Government to treat with men in arms, and if they did not lay them down they would be compelled to do so: these terms, which under the circumstances were, I think, just what they should have been, having been rejected, and the sepoys positively refusing to lay down their arms, the officer returned at full speed, and having made known their determination by a preconcerted sign, a round was, after a short interval, fired from the body-guard guns; on this, the signal agreed upon for the attack, the artillery in the park in the rear of the 47th's lines, immediately opened a thundering cannonade on the mutineers from the intervening trees, huts, &c. Not a gun of them could have been visible from the spot by the body of the mutineers, though they could not have been ignorant of their vicinity, their outlying sentries being within a few yards of their muzzles. Peal now followed peal, and the smoke rose in dense columns high above the surrounding woods. Our line steadily advanced towards the mutineers, and exhibited a brilliant and imposing sight. The mutineers' courage, which held to this point, now failed them, they wavered, broke, threw down their arms, divested themselves of their coats, clothing, and accoutrements, and fled."

Some of the mutineers were mercilessly slaughtered in their flight by their quondam comrades, and of the fugitives taken alive twelve were hung. At the execution, when the last cries for "Mercy, mercy, my lord Company's mercy!" were heard, the other sepoys were observed to be strongly agitated; but the scene closed in quiet, and as the troops marched along the front of the scaffold, where twelve dead bodies were swinging above their heads, the solemn wail of the Adeste Fidelis from the band of each regiment as it passed was the only sound that mingled with that of the measured tread of the men.

In 1825 the British exercised their authority as the paramount power in India by an interference in the affairs of a native state to which they were not called by treaty. A usurper had placed himself on the throne of Bhurtpore, and after negotiations had failed, Lord Combermere, the commander-in-chief, was despatched against the fortress of that name with twenty-five thousand men and a large train of artillery. The siege was commenced on the 23rd of December, but as the walls were sixty feet thick it was only by mining that a practicable breach could be effected, and this was not completed till the 18th January. On that day, however, after a fierce resistance, the place was carried by assault, and its fortifications destroyed.

Lord William Bentinck succeeded to Lord Amherst in 1828, but the affairs of his government belong chiefly to another department of this work. It will be useful, notwithstanding, to notice slightly some of the military operations, as they will assist us in forming an idea of the progress and feeling of the country.

In 1831 occurrences took place in Mysore which are fraught with instruction. When Tippoo was slain and

his dominions divided, the English, with that strange unconsciousness they have so frequently exhibited of their Indian destiny, set apart a portion of the territory for a descendant of the ancient princes, and placed him on the throne as an agent of misrule, and a standing barrier against the advancement of the people. For this there could be no excuse but generosity, for the legitimate house had been altogether set aside during two powerful reigns, those of Hyder and Tippoo, and had fallen into complete oblivion. The result was just what might have been expected, and what continues to take place to this day wherever similar arrangements have been made. The people were driven to desperation by tyranny and extortion, conspiracies were formed, and bodies of malcontents shut themselves up in fastnesses, resolved to resist to the death; till at length the English under obligation of their treaty stepped in, and after the usual bloodshed restored a submissiveness which in such cases is termed order. After this was effected they redeemed their original error. They had wisely reserved to themselves the power of assuming in case of need the administration of the affairs of the country, and finding that the whole government was rotten to the very centre, they pensioned the rajah and placed the territory of Mysore in the hands of a British commission, where it remains to this day.

In the following year a serious disturbance occurred in the zemindary of Chota Nagpore under the government of Bengal. The spirit of insubordination spread, till the whole of the district was in a state of insurrection under a recognised leader, and robbery and murder became the sole employment of the inhabitants. A force of not less than four regiments of infantry, with one of cavalry, and seven pieces of artillery, was employed in

following the insurgents among the hills and jungles, and on one occasion a squadron of cavalry was obliged to retreat before a large body of the enemy. At length the leader of the insurrection was killed, and the revolt soon after died away, four sirdars being executed, and two condemned to imprisonment for life.

In 1834 there was another little war in the Deccan, but carried on under circumstances of great difficulty from the nature of its ground. The rajah of Coorg, a state bordering on Mysore, appears to have been not only a monster of vice but a madman, and as native governments always take their character from the idiosyncracies of the sovereign, the country was ruined. The prince had murdered all the other males of his house, and in other cases sacrificed men, women, and children indiscriminately to his policy or revenge; and at length his own sister fled into Mysore and claimed the protection of the British resident against the incestuous passion of her brother. The British government remonstrated and negotiated as long as possible; but at length a proclamation was issued that, on account of his oppression and cruelty to his subjects, and his disrespect to the British government, the rajah had forfeited his crown. This was followed up by eight regiments of native infantry, with some detachments of royal troops, entering the territory in four divisions; and after much hard fighting and the encounter of extraordinary obstacles from the impracticable nature of the country, they succeeded in April, 1834, in capturing the fort of Markara, upon which the rajah surrendered. On this occasion the British could not well have set up another prince, for the one they deposed had taken good care to have no expectants in his way, and the vacant throne, therefore, was without a claimant. Coorg, accordingly,

was annexed to the British dominions, and the ex-rajah, instead of being brought to the scaffold, which his crimes deserved, was sent to reside at Benares on a magnificent pension.

It is necessary to notice here, although only in a cursory manner, a great change which took place in 1833 in the character of the East India Company. The reader can hardly fail to have observed that at the commencement of the intercourse with India, the Company was called into existence by compulsory circumstances. The commerce of the great country in question was a prize for which the nations of Europe contended and fought; and individual adventurers edging themselves in among the disputants could only have enjoyed a stolen traffic as privateers, or uniting for mutual protection, must have traded as a body without the countenance of their government, or the support of the *points d'appui* afforded by territorial possessions: The weight, solidity, and force of a privileged company were requisite for the establishment of the trade; but that once accomplished it came only to be a question of time, as to when the interest of the monopolists should give way before the interest of the nation of which they formed a part. With regard to India, however, it was supposed by many that the circumstances were so peculiar as to set her without the pale of ordinary reasoning. It was affirmed that to open the trade would injure the Company, and ruin the private merchants, without effecting any extension of business; and for this reason that the native inhabitants neither could nor would consume more European goods than they had hitherto done. "In the first place," said the advocates of the monopoly, among other reasons, "the body of the people are too poor to purchase; in the second place, even when possessed of money, their religious pre-

judices, their habits of living, and the simplicity of their furniture and dress would restrain them; and in the third place, the habits of the natives in general, but more particularly of the wealthy Bengalees, are parsimonious to a degree unknown in any other nation, and of which the mercantile body at home have no adequate idea."

"In their households," affirmed an assistant-judge who had many opportunities of knowing the country and the people, "they want none of our luxuries. Except the very higher ranks, none of the natives furnish their houses. They have no tables, no chairs, no gay couches, no knives and forks, no spoons, no plates or dishes. They eat from the ground, and sitting on the ground; their fingers furnish knives and forks. Their food is one and the same all over the country. A curry of fish or vegetables among the higher ranks, and a dish of split peas and rice among the peasantry, is all that they desire; their drink is pure water from a brass pot; their plantain leaf forms the plate from which they eat. In their household management and their food, they are particularly averse to any interference or innovation. These prejudices are wisely inculcated as a part of their religion."

The same writer, as an example of the parsimonious habits of the rich baboos, states that he was present at a supper where the host, on being asked if he had supplied wine, replied in the affirmative and produced a bottle of gin, three bottles of beer, and two of claret. This was at a marriage feast which cost the miserly Bengalee *twenty thousand pounds.*

Such were the prejudices that prevailed even among intelligent persons before the opening of the trade. In 1793, however, what was supposed to be a prodigious step in advance was taken, by permission being given to

the public to export and import goods, with certain exceptions, *in the Company's ships.* This led to numerous speculations among the free merchants and officials in India in sending or bringing produce home; but it was obvious that the outward trade would be very limited, as few shippers would have the courage to enter under such restrictions into competition with the great monopolists. At this time the annual exports of the Company were about a million sterling; and during the five years ending with 1811, the average was rather less than more. At length, on the termination of the charter in 1813, a further and much more considerable extension of the freedom of trade was granted, by private individuals being permitted to traffic direct with Calcutta, Madras, Bombay, and Pinang. The consequence of this was that the trade very speedily increased in value to three times its previous amount.

In losing the entire monopoly of the Indian trade, the Company lost nothing, and the country gained a great deal; but when it came towards the termination of the new charter in 1833, the question arose as to the Chinese trade which still remained in their hands exclusively, and in fine, as to their very existence as a commercial body. Here again it was said that there was something peculiar in the position of China which rendered the usual principles of free trade inapplicable in this question. It was contended that the Company alone could manage the Chinese, and hold their ground against the Hong; and moreover that the trade was not only useful as a means of remittance, but that the profits were necessary to enable them to defray the expense of governing India. Against this it was argued that the monopoly was not merely an injury to the general commerce and manufactures of the country, but that under it English merchants were fettered by re-

strictions from which those of other nations were free. The private traders of America, for instance, might take out goods from England, and bring back produce as they thought proper, while the English themselves were obliged to look idly on. As for the restrictions which limited the circulation of British goods in China, these would be done away with gradually by free trade; whereas so long as monopoly met monopoly, so long as the Company and the Hong acted and reacted on each other, no change whatever could be expected. It can hardly be doubted which side had the best of the argument, but at any rate by the new charter, terminating in 1854, the East India Company ceased to be a commercial body; continuing, however, to govern, with the concurrence of the Board of Control, those dominions which they now held in trust for the British Crown.

We now resume the survey of their history in the exercise of those political functions to which they were thus restricted.

When the non-interference policy was laid aside treaties had been entered into with the Rajpoot states, but one of them, the rajah of Joudpore, now proving unruly, a force assembled at Ajmere consisting of not less than twelve regiments of infantry, besides a strong body of cavalry—an army, one might have supposed, sufficient to reduce the whole of Rajahstan. The dispute, however, was amicably arranged without coming to blows, which is to say, of course, that the Hindoo prince complied with all the demands of the English; but security having been forgotten for the expenses of the large armament organized for his chastisement, the district and salt lake of Sambhur were sequestrated for the purpose. The same proceeding was taken with reference to Jyepore. These, though comparatively unimportant, were

the principal political occurrences of Lord William Bentinck's administration, although various disturbances had been in a state of preparation for some years, to call forth the energies of Lord Auckland on his arrival in 1836.

An insurrection against British authority had broken out in Kimedy in 1834, and had been quieted in the following year, although not without the employment of a force of two thousand men. In the neighbouring territory of Goomsoor hostilities of the same kind were commenced in 1835, but in consequence chiefly of the impracticable nature of the country, the insurrection was not put down till some months after the new Governor-General's arrival. Similar disturbances took place in Canara, and it is worthy of remark were terminated with the assistance of the population of Coorg.

We now arrive at the war in Affghanistan, and shall give the history of its origin as nearly as economy of space will permit in the words of the proclamation issued at Simla on the 1st of October, 1838.

The treaties entered into by the British Government in the year 1832, with the Ameers of Sinde, the Nabob of Bahawulpore, and Runjeet Singh, had for their object, by opening the navigation of the Indus, to facilitate the extension of commerce, and to gain for the British nation in Central Asia that legitimate influence which an interchange of benefits would naturally produce. Captain Burnes accordingly was deputed towards the close of the year 1836, on a mission to Dost Mahomed Khan, the chief of Cabul, but while he was on his journey information was received by the Governor-General that the troops of Dost Mahomed had made a sudden and unprovoked attack on those of the ancient ally of the British, Runjeet Singh. It was

naturally to be apprehended that the Maharaja would not be slow to avenge this aggression; and it was to be feared that the flames of war being once kindled in those regions, the peaceful and beneficial purposes of the British Government would be altogether frustrated. In order to avert this result the Governor-General authorized Captain Burnes to offer his lordship's mediation to Dost Mahomed Khan; the Maharaja having consented that in the mean time hostilities on his part should be suspended.

It subsequently came to the knowledge of the Governor-General that a Persian army was besieging Herat; that intrigues were actively prosecuted throughout Affghanistan, for the purpose of extending Persian influence and authority even beyond the Indus, and that the court of Persia had otherwise afforded evidence of being engaged in designs wholly at variance with the principles and objects of its alliance with Great Britain.

After much time spent by Captain Burnes in fruitless negotiation at Cabool, it appeared that Dost Mahomed Khan, chiefly in consequence of his reliance upon Persian encouragement and assistance, persisted in urging the most unreasonable pretensions upon Runject Singh, and that he aimed at schemes of aggrandizement and ambition, injurious to the security and peace of the frontiers of India; openly threatening to call in every foreign aid which he could command.

It was now evident that no further interference could be exercised by the British Government to bring about a good understanding between the Sikh rulers and Dost Mahomed Khan; and the hostile policy of the latter chief showed that, so long as Cabool remained under his government, the interests of the Indian Empire of Great

Britain would be in jeopardy. In the mean time, the ulterior designs of Persia, had been, by a succession of other events, as well as the siege of Herat, more openly manifested; and her Majesty's envoy had been compelled to quit the court of the Shah, and to make a public declaration of the cessation of all intercourse between the two governments. The necessity under which Great Britain was placed, of regarding the present advance of the Persian arms into Affghanistan, as an act of hostility towards herself, had been officially communicated to the Shah. Attention was naturally drawn at this juncture to the position and claims of Shah Soojah-ool-moolk, who, on his empire being usurped by its present rulers, found an honourable asylum in the British dominions. The Governor-General was satisfied that a pressing necessity, as well as every consideration of justice and policy, warranted him in espousing the cause of that prince; and considering it proper that Runjeet Singh should have the offer of becoming a party to the contemplated operations, a tripartite treaty was accordingly concluded by the British Government, the Maharaja, and Shah Soojah-ool-moolk, for the restoration of the Shah to the throne of his ancestors.

Such were the reasons assigned for the invasion of Affghanistan; but a few more words are requisite to enable the reader to comprehend the following sketch of operations.

Peshawur, the ostensible object of contention, had been conquered by the Sikhs in 1819; Mooltan and Cashmere having fallen before their arms in the preceding year. During another invasion in 1823 a bloody battle was fought in Peshawur between the Sikhs and Affghans; and although the former was victorious, they

found it so difficult to preserve their conquest that they divided the territory between the Shah of Herat and Dost Mahomed Khan, a Burukzye chief then struggling for the supremacy at Cabool. At the beginning of the century the Suddozye family had been deposed by the turbulent chiefs of the country; but Soojah, a younger son, who had taken refuge in the British dominions, after several attempts had at length succeeded in reconquering his throne, which he occupied, however, only till 1810, when he was again driven away into Hindostan. It was during this interregnum of strife and anarchy that the struggle of Dost Mahomed commenced; and in 1826 he made himself master of Cabool, of which he kept possession notwithstanding an attempt made by Soojah in 1834 to regain it.

Although Soojah was unsuccessful in the attempt, it was the means of Runjeet Singh acquiring a title to Peshawur, at least as legitimate as that of conquest; for, by a treaty of friendship and assistance entered into with the deposed prince, he obtained a formal cession of the country, of which he took possession with an army. It was an attempt of Dost Mahomed to recapture this territory which led to the tripartite treaty; an attempt, it should be observed, not more lawful than the conquest of Runjeet Singh, since Dost Mahomed was himself a usurper, and since at any rate Affghanistan was already dismembered when he grasped at the throne.

The mention of the designs of Persia in the proclamation must not be understood as referring to that nation alone, but also to Russia, whose influence was supposed to operate behind the scenes; for at the time there was in many quarters an extraordinary, and in all probability unfounded, apprehension of the advance of that all-grasping power towards India. At all events the

siege of Herat, the capital of a principality formerly a province of Affghanistan, was abandoned by the Persians soon after the tripartite treaty was signed, although sufficient motives remained to induce Lord Auckland to commence the war.

CHAPTER VI.

FROM THE TRIPARTITE TREATY TO THE PRESENT TIME.

RUNGEET SINGH, although consenting to keep on foot an army of observation of fifteen thousand men in Peshawur, would not permit the British to pass through his territories, the direct route to Cabool; and the army, therefore, under the command of Sir John Keane, proceeded through Sinde to penetrate into the enemy's country by the Bolan Pass. In Sinde every possible obstacle was interposed by the Ameers (who were bound to the British by specific provisions, as well as by a treaty) short of downright hostility, and at one time indeed they appeared to be collecting the troops even for that purpose; but at length they were forced into a new treaty, and the payment of 100,000*l.*, on account of tribute which they were due as feudatories to the Doorannee government, and the army crossing the Indus plunged into the desert beyond, the Bengal division arriving on the 6th of March, 1839, at the opening of the Bolan Pass.

Through this stupendous defile they worked their way for seventy miles, till they had gained the table land above at a height of five thousand four hundred and thirty-seven feet from the plains; and though harassed by the predatory tribes of the neighbourhood, by unusual fatigue, and by extreme scarcity of food both for men and horses, continued their march till they arrived before the walls of Candahar, having traversed a distance of one thousand miles from their mustering place, Ferozepore. Here they were joined in a week by the Bombay column, whose sufferings had been still more severe, from the route having been already swept of any forage it afforded. The forces there assembled, for the opening of the campaign, amounted in all to fifteen thousand men.

The western capital of Affghanistan was supposed to contain one hundred thousand inhabitants, and was surrounded by a fortification three miles in circumference, and a ditch twenty-four feet wide and ten deep. The wall within, twenty-seven feet high and from fourteen to twenty feet thick, was defended by bastions, and the six gates by six double bastions. The hostile chiefs, however, deserted the place on the appearance of the hostile force, and Shah Soojah entered Candahar with the apparent good will of the people. On the 1st of July the troops continued their march, and after traversing a distance of two hundred and thirty miles, arrived in three weeks under the walls of Ghizni. Their number, including the Shah's contingent of four thousand, was twelve thousand men with forty pieces of artillery.

This celebrated city and fortress, about which the British had received no certain information, was found to be situated on the extremity of a range of hills, and protected by the citadel from higher ground on the north.

It had a lofty rampart, built on a scarped mound thirty-five feet high, flanked by numerous towers, and surrounded by a fausse braye and a wide and deep ditch filled with water. The garrison consisted of between three and four thousand troops, and the population of the town of about an equal number. A formal siege was out of the question from the advanced season of the year; mining was impossible from the depth and width of the ditch; and so was escalade from the height of the parapet. The British had no heavy battering train to breach the walls; all the gates were built up but one, and this one, therefore, was decided upon as the point of attack.

At midnight on the 3rd of July, when the gusty wind carried away all sounds of danger from the fortress, a small party of sappers marched up with stealthy pace to the gate. The officers could see lights through the chinks, and the guard within smoking slumberously away the middle watch—their last watch in this world. Having done their duty, the sappers retired to cover; and presently there rose upon the night a burst of earth-born thunder, which startled every sleeper in Ghizni from his dreams, and threw a lurid glare over the devoted city. Not only the gate was destroyed, but a portion of the building in which it was fixed came down in ruins that choked the path. There was a moment's pause after the shock, and then the blast of a trumpet was heard, and the storming party, led on by Colonel Dennie, rushed over the ruins into the gateway. It was pitch-dark, for the arch was low and the path crooked, and the forlorn hope could only see the faces of their enemies by the flashes of their gun-flints; but soon the dull sky appeared overhead; the supporting column came pouring through the gateway; and Ghizni was won.

Leaving a garrison in Ghizni, the British troops pur-

sued their march to Cabool, hearing on their way of the death of Runjeet Singh and the desertion of Dost Mahomed by his chiefs and the greater part of his army. On the 7th, Shah Soojah entered his capital in triumph. Captain Outram, who had been sent with a party in pursuit of Dost Mahomed, rejoined soon after unsuccessful; and on the 3rd of September the troops were further increased by Colonel Wade from Peshawur with ten thousand men. On the 17th of September the Bombay column quitted Cabool, and returned by Khelat, which they captured with circumstances of great gallantry; and on the 13th of October a portion of the Bengal troops, under Lord Keane, set out on their return to India by way of Peshawur.

Khelat was the citadel of a powerful Beloochee chief who had shown great hostility to the British on their arrival in his country at the head of the Bolan Pass on their march to Candahar. "On our surmounting a small range of hills," says Captain Outram, "the town and fortress of Khelat suddenly burst upon our view. It was truly an imposing sight. Some small hills in front were crowned with masses of soldiers, and the towering citadel which frowned above them in their rear was completely clustered over with human beings,—ladies of the harem chiefly, who had assembled to witness the discomfiture of the Feringees, and the prowess of their lords, all of whom, with the Khan at their head, had previously marched out to the heights where they awaited us in battle array." The fair spectators turned out to be wrong in their anticipations, for the British, although numbering only a thousand bayonets, stormed the heights in gallant style, driving the enemy into the fortress, which they speedily captured, killing four hundred of the garrison, and making two thousand prisoners. This closed the

first Affghan campaign, in which the enemy lost two thousand five hundred men, while the British casualties were only thirty-one killed and one hundred and eight wounded.

Of all the great Doorannee empire, which stretched from Meshed to the sea, and from the western boundary of Beloochistan to the Great Desert of the Indus, Shah Soojah was in possession only of Cabool, Bamean, Ghizni, Jellalabad, and Candahar; but even this territory soon became difficult to keep notwithstanding the presence of an organised force, including the Shah's contingent, of twenty thousand men. The year 1840 closed with rumours of insurrection on all sides, and in the spring of the following year the spirit of active resistance was up throughout the whole country. The wild enthusiasm of the mountaineers beyond Bamean may be collected from the fact, that on hay and straw being piled up around the inner tower of one of their forts and set fire to in order to compel a surrender, the garrison allowed themselves to be suffocated to a man; and the women and children who had taken refuge on the roof were only got down by means of a rope through the burning building. We have no room, however, for the minor details, and must hasten on to the result of the war.

Dost Mahomed had taken refuge beyond the Hindoo Koosh, where after numerous personal adventures he succeeded in organising a party in his favour even in Cabool. The country between Bamean and Cabool more especially was disaffected to the Shah, and in the capital itself a conspiracy was discovered by the British envoy, Sir A. Burnes, to drive the Suddoyze dynasty from the throne. All was alarm both there and at Ghizni.

The British abandoned Syghan, their most northerly post, and fell back upon Bamean, to which they were

followed by Dost Mahomed and eight or ten thousand Uzbeg Tartars. A few hundreds, however, of the troops at Bamean under Colonel Dennie served to rout their army, and the British pushing on re-occupied Syghan. In the little valley of Purwan Durrah the Dost was more successful, for on the 2nd of November the Bengal 2nd cavalry were seized with an unaccountable panic and fled before the red standard of the Affghans. The ex-king, however, was not encouraged by this advantage; he knew that, so far as regarded him, the war was at an end, for his treasury was empty, his allies were falling off, and the Sikhs, on whom he relied for support, were opening their country for the passage of British reinforcements. He did not suffer himself, however, to be taken prisoner, but, with an unconscious spirit of romance, which appears to be a part of his character, he vanished from the field of battle, and on the evening of the following day delivered his sword to Sir William Nacnaghten, as the envoy was taking his evening's ride near Cabool.

It is unnecessary to occupy space with much of the hard fighting which took place in Beloochistan in 1840; but the resistance of the khan of Khelat, who was looked upon as the natural head of the confederacy against the British in this part of the country, was attended by more lasting consequences than the other disturbances. At the capture of the fortress already mentioned, the then Khan was killed and a successor set up by the captors; but his son Nusseer, a lad of fourteen, raised the standard of revolt in June, and after threatening Quettah in vain, actually retook Khelat. Reinforcements, however, poured in both from Candahar and by the Bolan Pass, and the young chief after fighting bravely was fortaken for a time by his adherents. On the 2d of Novem-

ber, General Nott from Quettah recovered Khelat without striking a blow; by the end of the year the whole of the tribes were either pacified or disabled; and the young khan having at length surrendered was finally placed on the rude throne of his fathers. During the whole of the military movements referred to the loss of the British was three hundred killed, while that of the enemy is supposed to have amounted to two thousand five hundred.

Some transactions of nearly the same kind occurred in and around the territory of Candahar throughout 1841; but till near the close of this year Cabool, though full of discontent, was comparatively quiet. The curses muttered against the British rule were deep but not loud; and had it not been for a financial measure of apparently little consequence, the impatience of the people might have been gradually subdued, or else the Indian government might have fallen upon some decent pretext for withdrawing the troops from a country which even troops like theirs might occupy but could not subdue.

The Ghilzi tribes who occupied the eastern passes into Affghanistan held the fate of the British in their hands, for it was by their sufferance that a communication was kept up between Hindostan and Cabool, and that stores and reinforcements found their way into the latter. So long as the passes were open the people might murmur, or even murder when they found opportunity, but they dared not rise in a body; and although well aware of the smouldering fires around them, the British remained proud and tranquil so long as they saw not the flames. This state of security was maintained, not by force of arms, but simply by the payment of black mail to the amount of 8000*l.* a year to those Ghilzi chiefs who were the masters of the passes; and in an evil hour

the Indian government, whose finances were crippled by the numerous expenses of the war—and who were by this time engaged also in a conflict with China—determined to reduce the allowance by one half. This allowance, it is said, was not in money paid but in tribute to Shah Soojah remitted, which makes the matter worse. At any rate the measure was all that was wanted to set the country in a blaze. The Ghilzies seized a kafila with 2,000*l.* on its way to Cabool, and at once sealed up the roads and cut off all communication with Hindostan. The British authorities at Cabool sent a regiment under General Sale to *clear the passes!*—which after being reinforced by another regiment, was able, by fighting every inch of the way, to reach Jellalabad, where it was shut up for six months.

On the 2d of November an insurrection broke out in the city of Cabool, which was signalized by the instant murder of Sir A. Burnes and two other officers. The British troops were at this time when union was most wanted, divided between the cantonments and the Bala Hissar, or citadel, about two miles distant on a rocky eminence to the east of the city. A hostile population of sixty thousand souls was between these posts, which were besieged by an army of from ten to fifteen thousand men. The whole country was up in arms, and both in the north and south a small detachment hastening to the principal scene of action was cut in pieces. The town was shelled from the Bala Hissar, but the insurgents obtained possession of the Commissariat Fort — and from that moment may be dated a panic which spread among the Indian troops, shivering with unaccustomed cold, shut up in the heart of a wild and hostile country, and with almost certain starvation before their eyes.

General Elphinstone who commanded the British

forces was unhappily disabled by bad health, and the infirmity of his body appears to have acted upon his mind. With or without reason he did not believe that the troops could be depended upon, and he adhered throughout to a defensive policy which destroyed the last chance of safety; while the envoy, Sir William Macnaghten, after his eyes were opened to the true perils of their situation, invariably advocated those bold and energetic measures in which the British had heretofore found their salvation in quite as desperate extremities. Had the whole force retired at once to the Bala Hissar, it seems probable that they might have held out during winter; but owing to the division in the councils no such decided step was taken, and occupied in the defence of the large and straggling cantonments, and in the capture and recapture of the forts in its neighbourhood, the troops continued to struggle and to bleed till famine came to the aid of the foe, and their energies were prostrated by actual hunger. It was now too late to think of anything but retreat.

Overtures were at length made and accepted, and on the 23d of December—fifty-three days since the commencement of the insurrection—Sir William Macnaghten accompanied by several officers repaired to a meeting with the chiefs for the final arrangement of the treaty. The envoy was murdered by Akbar Khan a son of Dost Mahomed; and Captain Trevor who endeavoured to defend him shared his fate. This was attributed, however, to an accidental ebullition of passion, and in all probability with truth; as Major Pottinger who now officiated as envoy, brought the treaty to a conclusion; and on the 6th of January 1842, the British troops, consisting of about four thousand five hundred fighting men with twelve thousand followers, and the ladies of the European officers, marched out from Cabool to find their way through

the passes to Jellalabad. Six hostages were kept for the due observance of the treaty, which included the evacuation of Affghanistan.

Faint with famine and fatigue, and clothed in rags, but still possessing their arms, the English left the fatal city, only a few individuals having assembled round the gate to see them depart. It was an ominous farewell. The snow was deep on the ground, covering the grim mountains through whose chasms they were to thread their horrid path like a winding-sheet. The advance-guard was not molested, but the Affghans, who had by this time filled the cantonments, saluted the rear at parting with a round of shot; upon which the baggage, commissariat, and ammunition were abandoned, those who had charge of them flying for their lives, and the wounded men, women, and children of the followers lying down in the snow to die. Thus the retreat was commenced.

The first day they marched only six miles, through a swamp encrusted with ice; and, scraping away the snow, the more fortunate of the ladies received a half shelter from two or three of the small tents called palls, which admitted beneath the sides the bitter wind of the mountains. The rest of the multitude were not so happy, and the men, it would appear, were generous, for some of these were found at daylight frozen to death.

On the 7th the march resembled a flight. No orders redeemed the confusion of the bivouac; no bugle called them from their rest; but most of them pressing on as soon as they had light enough to grope their way, choked up the dreary path with headlong masses of soldiers and followers, men, women, and children. The Affghans were on their traces like wolves before the last had moved, and seized the little baggage that was left.

Gathering thicker and thicker around them as they advanced, they compelled them to spike the few guns of the mountain train they had, and murdered all who lagged behind benumbed with cold and feeble from hunger. That night they halted at Boodhak, huddled in a mass as before.

On the 8th they rose from their lair, paralysed with cold; the sipahis burned their accoutrements for the sake of the warmth; and it was with difficulty the officers got men enough into order to fight their way through the enemy, as the living, rising up from among the stiffened corpses of those who had died in the night, recommenced their march. Mahomed Akbar proved to be with the enemy, and a negotiation being entered into with him he engaged to protect the troops on the condition of eventually receiving a sum of money, and of Major Pottinger and two other officers being given up to him as hostages for General Sale's evacuation of Jellalabad. The terms were acceded to, but the chiefs unfortunately had no power over their followers, even if they wished to exert it; and the melancholy cortège pursued their way under a heavy fire from the heights around them, which did not spare even the English ladies. In a more formal attack on the rear several soldiers' wives and an officer's child were carried off by the Affghans, and one lady compelled to pursue her way on foot through the showering bullets with an infant only three months old in her arms. At this time it was calculated that five hundred of the troops and two thousand five hundred of the camp followers had been killed. They reached their encamping ground in the midst of a heavy fall of snow, and the officers and their wives and children took refuge in the half of a sipahi's pall. This was the object of such attraction to the shivering multitude that

numbers tried to press their way into the tent, and in the morning it was found surrounded by corpses.

On the 9th Mahomed Akbar and his three hostages came into camp, and on his proposal it was determined that the married officers and their wives and children should put themselves under his protection. They accordingly picked their way through the naked corpses which strewed the road, and in three days arrived at Jugdalluk. As soon as the ladies were gone, almost all the irregular horse went over to the enemy in a body, and throughout the day numerous sipahis dropped away one by one, leaving their comrades to their fate. Snow-blindness now came on to add to the horrors of the scene, and that night a greater number than before died of cold, hunger, and misery.

On the 10th, while passing through a narrow gorge, the advance were exposed to a merciless fire from the Affghans, who had posted themselves on the cliffs above; while the rear on coming up were closed in upon by a host of the enemy and cut off to a man. The remnant of the army was now small, consisting only of one hundred and twenty men, besides camp followers; but although Mahomed Akbar, who was hovering closely around them, offered to guarantee their safe arrival at Jellalabad if they would lay down their arms, the proposal was refused. The route now lay for three miles along the bed of a mountain torrent, where the cliffs on both sides were lined with Affghans. The carnage was horrible. About twelve thousand had now perished, but four thousand living beings yet remained. The Jugdalluk Pass was still before them, two miles long, extremely narrow, and lined by steeps; and at seven in the evening the survivors pressed on in order to get through a place so well fitted for slaughter without the

knowledge of the Affghans. They had by this time descended into the valley of Tezeen; there was no longer snow on the ground; the night was still, and a splendid moon lighted them on their path of fate.

On the 11th they reached the valley of Jugdalluk, but this movement was of no avail, for the heights on either side were alive with Affghans. Here they took up a position near some ruined walls, and three bullocks being killed, devoured them raw in the agony of hunger. After a short respite, the Affghans commenced a murderous fire upon them from the cliffs; and at length General Elphinstone and two of his officers proceeded to a conference with Mahomed Akbar, who was in the neighbourhood with some other chiefs,—the remains of the army then numbering one hundred and fifty-one men.

On the 12th the British officers were still in the tents of the Affghans, and consented to purchase the lives of the survivors from the wild chiefs of the Pass with two lakhs of rupees. The slaughter, however, continued to go on, and the general not being permitted to return or even communicate with the troops, the latter determined to leave Jugdalluk during the night. The Affghans, however, were not slow in perceiving their intentions, and their march presented the usual horrors. The road had been flooded, and was now a mass of ice, and on arriving at a narrow gorge they found it closed up by barriers. The camp followers, who were in advance rushed back upon the soldiers, and a large body of the lurking enemy flung themselves upon the living mass with their knives. Here all discipline was at an end, even on the part of the officers. Those who were mounted rode over their comrades, and were fired at by the latter, it is said, as they fled; but the finer affections of

nature still triumphed, and the hungry, weary, bleeding soldiers, after having fought their way to a more open part of the country, halted for some time to bring the wounded away with them.

On the 13th, after having forded the Soorkhab river under a heavy fire, they moved towards Gundamuk before daylight; but the returning sun showed them that their force was diminished to twenty officers and sixty men, with three hundred camp followers, while the enemy in great numbers were closing in around them from every point of the compass. They posted themselves on a hill, and endeavoured to open negotiations with one of the chiefs of the neighbourhood; but the Affghans gathered around them, and after repeated struggles, which were only terminated when the ammunition of the British was expended, massacred them almost to a man.

That there was grievous mismanagement at the outset of this unhappy business is sufficiently obvious, and it is not less so that the delusion under which the government laboured as to the real condition and spirit of the enemy's country was shared in by the army. By the one a general was appointed to the chief command who was unfitted by bad health from even ordinary duty; and by the other the ladies and young children of the officers were transported into the heart of the Affghan mountains as if on a party of pleasure. But if there was at first mismanagement there was afterwards fatality. The nature of the country to be traversed rendered speed impossible, and even the weakest opposition important; while in addition to this the arms of the Affghans were cold and hunger as well as shot and steel. Local feelings answered all the purposes of national spirit; and the wild clans of the Passes who would have sold the inde-

pendence of their country collectively for a bribe, poured out from their holes and fastnesses upon the Feringees like hornets invaded in their retreats. Sums that would have made the fortune of these petty chiefs were refused for the higher gratification of hate and revenge; and on the fatal hill of Gundamuk they plunged their knives into the few survivors with an animosity as fresh as when they first began to haunt the retreating steps of an army.

It now became a question as to what course the British were to pursue—whether to carry out at once their original intention of retiring from the country, or, in the first place, to inflict a signal chastisement upon the demon-like population. Whilst this was argued by the people and the army from personal feelings, the government, at the head of which Lord Ellenborough had now taken the place of Lord Auckland, were obliged to attend to very different considerations. To enter upon a war of reprisal without the certainty of success would be to risk the loss of India; while to put it into the power of the disaffected to report that the British had been beaten out of their country by the Affghans, would be to light the flames of war from one end of Hindostan to the other. The Governor-General, fortunately, did not fall into the too common mistake of issuing precise orders from a distance at which it was impossible for him to form an accurate judgment, but left much to the tried sagacity of the generals in command, Pollock in the east and Nott in the west; while he zealously occupied himself in the duty of forwarding troops and materiel towards the point of danger. It was ultimately determined to ravage the offending country with fire and sword before retiring; and to this policy of intimidation and punishment we shall find the

British continuing to adhere even after they had recrossed the Indus.

The orders to evacuate which had been issued at Cabool received obedience at Ghuzni, which was then occupied only by a single regiment; but General Sale who had fought his way to Jellalabad through the same passes in which the army was afterwards massacred, resolved to understand no such solecism in British warfare, but to hold out the town till succours should reach him from India. But he did not merely hold out, for, hearing of General Pollock's advance by the Khyber Pass with seven regiments besides artillery, he resolved to facilitate his operations by an attack upon the Affghan camp in the plains. It was a brilliant and effective sally. The camp was defended by six thousand troops under Mahomed Akbar, drawn up in order of battle, and they were only defeated after a spirited struggle, in which Colonel Dennie lost his life.

On the 5th of April, two days before this exploit, General Pollock had forced the entrance of the Khyber Pass, which he found strongly barricaded with stone walls, and defended by ten thousand of the enemy; and on the 16th, with little further interruption, he reached Jellalabad. In a few days after Shah Soojah was murdered at Cabool. The true nature of this personage's conduct with reference to his patrons, the British, is unknown to history,—and was in all probability unknown to himself. He acted as well as he could for his own interest; but not being exactly sure what that interest was, whether to protect or betray his Feringee friends, he sometimes did a little of the one and sometimes of the other just as circumstances determined. The united forces remained for some time inactive at Jellalabad,

where they were joined by seven thousand Sikh troops.

Some skirmishes took place, of varying fortunes between Quettah and Candahar; but at length, on the 8th of August, the latter city was abandoned by the British, after they had blown up the powder magazine and destroyed all the spare commissariat and arsenal stores. Four thousand of the troops under General England proceeded to Quettah, and returned in the following month to India by the Bolan Pass; while the remainder, amounting to seven thousand men, under General Nott, took the road to Cabool, defeating the Affghans near Ghizni, and destroying that town by fire and its citadel by mines. They then proceeded by easy stages to Cabool, where they arrived on the 17th of September.

General Pollock, in the mean time, had at length moved from Jellalabad, and arrived at Gundamuk on the 23d of August, the entrance to the chain of passes by which Cabool is approached. Two miles thence he encountered the enemy, drove them from their posts, burned their villages, and cut down their mulberry trees and vineyards. At the pass of Jugdalluk another collision took place with the same result, at which nearly all those chiefs were present who had taken a part in the butchery of the Cabool army. At Tezeen the enemy under Mahomed Akbar were sixteen thousand strong, and defended the pass with bravery, but they were routed with great slaughter; and on the 16th of September the British flag was planted on the Bala Hissar of Cabool. Some of the prisoners who had remained in the hands of the Affghans were given up, and some made their escape, but all,—ladies, officers, and children,—with the exception of General Elphinstone who had died some time before, at length found themselves in safety in the British camp.

The army in its progress had been joined by two or three hundred fugitives, and these were all that remained of the Cabool force. An engagement now took place at Istaliff in the Kohistan valley, in which the enemy were beaten and the town destroyed; and the purposes of the campaign being thus effected, the bazaar of Cabool—the great entrépot of the trade of Central India—was kindled for a bonfire, and the victorious army set out on its return to India. At Jellalabad they destroyed the defences of the town, and then blew up the fort of Ali Musjid; and in the midst of an almost continuous skirmish with the predatory tribes, at length cleared the Khyber Pass and encamped on the plains of Peshawur. By the close of the year they arrived at Ferozepore, where they were received with a display of military pomp and triumph, in which forty thousand troops took part, and which could not fail of the effect it was no doubt intended to create in the fervid imaginations of India.

We must now bring up the narrative by a brief mention of some affairs which occurred during the Affghan war. Connected therewith is the occupation of Kurruck in the Persian Gulf, an island of which the British took possession by way of a warning to the Persian monarch, while he was pursuing the siege of Herat. As for Aden, it had become an object of vital necessity as a coal depot for the British steamers, and was fairly bought from the native sultan. That chief, however, repented of his bargain before the transfer of money or territory, and in 1839 the place was captured by force of arms.

In the same year some disturbances in Joudpore, and some which threatened to become of more consequence in Karnaul occupied the attention of Government. The nabob of the latter province had been secretly collecting arms to a very extraordinary extent; and on his designs

being discovered, the Rohilla mercenaries he employed stood the chance of a battle before he was captured. He was eventually taken prisoner and his territory confiscated. These events were connected with rumours of an intended general insurrection of the princes of India, in which the rajah of Sattarah the nominal chief of the Mahrattas, was supposed to be implicated. He was deposed, and his brother placed on the throne.

In 1840 an event occurred of extraordinary importance not only to India but to the whole world; but, as it will become our duty in another division of the work to describe somewhat at large the circumstances of the Chinese war, it is unnecessary to do more than briefly allude to them here. China had always been looked upon with a sort of awe by Europeans. The vastness of the empire would have signified little to the desperadoes of the west, but the concentration of its powers under a single government placed it altogether in a different category from India; and having no rival princes to enthrone or dethrone, no field for coercion or intrigue, they continued to trade and cringe, and to consider the permission to do so (which was not always granted) as a peculiar happiness.

But commerce, although with so vast and concentrated a mass to work upon, at length performed the task allotted to it in the destinies of mankind. The trade of the "western barbarians" extended till it became an object of interest, then of uneasiness, then of alarm, to the Imperial Government. They had hit upon a drug as an article of barter so well adapted to the taste of the Chinese that the balance of trade turned against that people, who at length required to pay in money for the gratification of what had become almost a necessary. The perpetual drain of the precious metals was met, not

as it would have been in Europe, by restraining imposts, but by utter prohibition; which, it is hardly necessary to say, in the case of a country with so extensive a seaboard and so imperfect a preventive service, merely injured the revenue without injuring the trade. Nay, the trade flourished the more as the stricter grew the prohibitions. Taste was changed into passion, and commerce into gaming. Even the heads of the local government, and probably the members of the imperial cabinet themselves, shared in the spoil of the revenue; while the Europeans flung themselves with zeal and determination upon the chances of a business which was no more illegal now than the regular trade had repeatedly been, and in which they won and lost large fortunes. Their own government declined interfering, for the drug, by whomever bought, was a source of large profit to India, and it was no affair of theirs to assist a foreign power to enforce its customs' regulations. The emperor grew desperate. Silver was precious, opium immoral; and the nation grew poor and drunken at the same moment. Still he would not be persuaded, even by his own more intelligent councillors, to take the only step which could by possibility have the slightest effect; and heaping insults and outrages upon the barbarians, he at length goaded them into war. In the middle of 1840, an expedition left India against a country containing between three and four million inhabitants; and, after the usual horrors attendant upon successful invasion, forced a treaty from the Chinese on the 29th of August, 1842, in which the opium trade was not mentioned at all, but by which the Emperor bound himself to pay twenty-one million dollars for the expenses of the war, to open five principal ports for trade, and to cede the island of Hong Kong in perpetuity to the British Crown. The news of this treaty and of the

destruction of Ghuzni and recapture of Cabool reached England by the same mail.

The "tail of the Affghan storm," as Sir Charles Napier called it, was now to come. The princes of Sinde were incensed, as we have seen, at the Tripartite Treaty, and did all in their power to retard and annoy the British in their march through their country. The purpose of the treaty was to re-establish the Doorannee empire, of which Sinde had been a feudal dependency; and they considered that they had at least a right to expect that the army employed in a war so manifestly contrary to their interest should march through the allied territory of Runjeet Singh, the most direct route from British India into Affghanistan. The Sikh prince, however, would not consent, and Lord Auckland, determined to enter into no quarrel that would interfere with his dreams of dictation in Central Asia, overruled the remonstrances of the weaker state, sent his troops through the heart of the country to climb into Affghanistan by the Bolan Pass, took forcible possession of Kurrachee, menaced Hyderabad with destruction, and demanded a sum of money in final payment of the Sindean tribute to the Doorannee empire. The Ameers were on the brink of having recourse to arms, but were at length, in February 1839, intimidated into a treaty to the following effect:—

A British force, not exceeding five thousand fighting men, was to be maintained in Sinde, and stationed at Tatta, or such other place westward of the river Indus as the Governor-General of India might select; three of the four Ameers were to pay one lakh of rupees each annually, in part payment of the expense of the British force (Meer Sobdar Khan being exempted); the British Government took upon itself the protection of the territo-

ries of the Ameers from all foreign oppression; the four Ameers remained absolute rulers in their respective principalities, into which the jurisdiction of the British Government should not be introduced, nor should the officers of the British Government listen to or encourage complaints against the Ameers from their subjects; the four Ameers should refer to the resident in Sinde any complaint of aggression which one of them might have to make against another, and the Resident, with the sanction of the Governor-General, would endeavour to mediate between them, and settle their differences; in case of aggressions by the subjects of one Ameer on the territories of another, and of the Ameer by whose subjects such aggressions were made declaring his inability to prevent them, in consequence of the offending parties being in rebellion to his authority, on a representation of the circumstances being made to the Governor-General by the Resident, the Governor-General would, if he saw fit, order such assistance to be afforded as might be requisite to bring the offenders to punishment; the Ameers were not to enter into any negotiation with any foreign chief or state without the knowledge and sanction of the British Government; the Ameers were to act in subordinate co-operation with the British Government for the purposes of defence, and furnish, for the service of the British Government, a body of three thousand troops whenever required; and these troops, when employed with the British forces, would be under the orders and control of the commanding officer of the British forces; while, if employed under British officers beyond the Sinde frontier, they would be paid by the British Government.

The Ameers were now told distinctly by Colonel Pottinger, the British agent, that "henceforth they must

consider Sinde to be, as it was in reality, a portion of Hindostan, in which the British were paramount, and entitled to act as they considered best and fittest for the general good of the whole empire." This may seem harsh, but the fact was *true;* and its enunciation at this particular time was in accordance with the views of Lord Auckland, and many other able men, on the subject of a combination of the western princes against the British dominion in India. At any rate, the treaty was signed, and the agent listened to with respectful assent.

During the greater part of the Affghan war the Ameers were watchful and agitated, but not openly disaffected, for the British, accepting the cession of Shikarpore in lieu of tribute, possessed that town together with Sukkur and Bukkur in Upper Sinde and Karruchee in Lower Sinde. Towards the close of the war, however, their wishes and intentions became obvious, and Lord Ellenborough's attention was strongly drawn towards an all but hostile country in which he had at the time only four thousand troops in two detachments four hundred miles asunder, and into which four thousand more were about to be brought back from Candahar by General England, who had already been beaten above the passes by an equal force of Beloochees. A new treaty was accordingly presented for the acceptance of the Ameers, providing for the permanent occupation of various ports on the Indus by the British, and giving the right (indispensable for their steamers) of cutting firewood on the banks of the river. Under existing circumstances this treaty was indispensable.

The demands of the British, so long as they were limited to the destruction of the independence of the nation, were not resisted; but to interfere with the *game preserves* of the Ameers, for the sake of which they had

well nigh depopulated the country, was not to be endured. The English, besides, had just emerged from the frightful Affghan war; the excitement and expectations of the disaffected states in India had not yet subsided; the British troops at hand numbered little more than an eighth part of their own; and a British force had actually been beaten but a short time before by an equal number of Beloochees. The Ameers, therefore, threw off the mask. They attacked the British residency at Hyderabad, and marched an army of twenty-two thousand men against Sir Charles Napier, whose force did not exceed two thousand eight hundred of all arms and twelve pieces of artillery. The emergency was sudden and the moment critical. Delay would add confidence and overwhelming numbers to the enemy, and in spite of the reinforcements it might obtain for the British would thus increase the disparity of strength. General Napier, therefore, did not even wait for their advance, but marched on to Meannee where they were in position, and gave them battle on the 17th of February, 1843. The fight was prolonged for three hours by the desperate courage of the Beloochees; but the destiny of England triumphed,—the enemy broke and fled, leaving a thousand of their number dead on the field, and in three days the British flag floated over the towers of Hyderabad.

On the 29th of March the Beloochees tried their fortune again, and with an army as numerous as before, strongly and skilfully posted at Dubba within four miles of Hyderabad, encountered the British, whose force now amounted to five thousand men. They were defeated with great slaughter, and the fate of the country finally determined. The Ameers were carried prisoners to Bombay, and Sinde eventually declared to be annexed to the British dominions.

Such, in a few words, is the history of an event which has caused much angry discussion in England. In these pages it passes with little observation, because it is read with the context of our Indian history. We have seen the little storekeepers of the coast rise before our eyes till they have become the sovereigns of a mighty empire. Dotted here and there among their dominions are some of the native states that have borne a part in our narrative, and which are still allowed to retain a nominal independence. But the independence consists in the privilege of being governed in the nineteenth century according to the model of earlier ages, when the country was the private property and the people the personal slaves of the prince; and every year the number of such states becomes smaller, by a process which is termed spoliation and tyranny by those who read history with the eyes of the mind shut. Sinde was the western frontier, including the Indus, the moat of our magnificent fortress, and the horrors of her misgovernment were not even respectable by their antiquity in the eyes of the inhabitants, being perpetrated by strangers and usurpers. Lord Auckland saw the necessity for the paramount power obtaining a command over her own frontier; and Lord Ellenborough, when the moment for coercion came, following in the steps of those men who have really won the dominion of India for England, instead of entering into a league with the brutal princes against the people, swept the former from their thrones at a blow, and opened to the latter the prospect of a Future in their social existence, hitherto shut out from them by the dull, dreary, dismal Present of oriental despotism.

But the Governor-General did not act thus in the case which next presented itself. The direct line of the Sindia family had expired in 1827, and a boy chosen by adoption to fill the throne, suffering the entire rule of

continue in the hands of his minister, spent his brief life in debauchery, and died childless in 1843. Another boy was adopted by the queen dowager, herself a little girl, when a struggle for power commenced between his minister, who had been opposed by the British government, and that of the late maharajah. The whole country was convulsed by the strife, and the ex-minister proving the stronger, brought over the queen dowager to his interest, and sent troops and artillery to guard the Chambul against the British.

But the British had determined to interfere, and their approach was not to be staid. Onward they marched to the number of fourteen thousand men. In vain the little queen submitted; in vain the turbulent minister was brought in chains to the camp; it was necessary to make a demonstration which should awe the wild chiefs of the country; and on the 29th of December, moving in two separate lines of march, they arrived at Maharajpore and Punniar, and found the Mahrattas, much stronger in number and posted on heights defended by ravines and one hundred pieces of artillery, ready to receive them. The Governor-General, who was in advance, found himself unawares in the midst of the battle, and preserved this accidental post without flinching, encouraging the men to do their duty. The entrenchments and batteries of the enemy were carried at the point of the bayonet, but with severe loss, and the Mahrattas behind, sustaining the shock that ensued with determined courage, were driven off the field after having slain or wounded a thousand of their assailants. Gwalior, the capital of the state, was then entered by the British without opposition, and a treaty concluded on the 10th of January—which leaves the country at the mercy of such disturbances nearly as much as ever.

We have seen throughout this strange eventful history

that the British in the acquisition of territory were, in their own estimation, *never in the wrong.* Infraction of treaties, treachery, debt, and a thousand other good and sufficient causes explained every step they took from the little factory of Surat to the throne of the Great Mogul: but the explanation, unluckily, was satisfactory to only one of the two parties concerned. The people of India understand conquest, for they are used to it; and no people under heaven care less whether the new government be legitimate or not provided it be better than the last. But argument is quite another thing; they will quibble on the points of a state paper as skilfully as a European; and, *if they do not find their situation ameliorated by the treaty*, they will without scruple take advantage of any real or supposed advantage they may have in the ratiocination to break it. In the case of Sinde, the Ameers were deposed and their dominions confiscated because they persisted in endangering the peace of India and outraging the supreme power. In the case of Gwalior, by the failure of heirs, the succession had lapsed to the British as lords paramount and successors of the Mogul; but instead of taking possession of the country they merely entered into a treaty to strengthen the hands, and thus perpetuate the misgovernment, of the rajah. The councils of the Company have been divided between these two lines of policy from the days of Clive down to the present year.

It may be said, that if there is an error in the latter course it is on the side of delicacy and moderation, and that at any rate the dominion of India has been falling and is falling into the hands of the Company as rapidly as could have been expected. There seems to be great theoretical weight in this argument, although its decision may be questionable in point of practical utility. Without affect-

ing to say that the Indian subjects of the British have as yet derived all the benefit they ought to have done from the government of an enlightened nation, it cannot be denied that, after a dreary pause of perhaps thousands of years, they have at least under the new auspices, *begun* that career of social progress which, it is to be hoped, is the destiny of the whole human race; while under the native princes the people do not even remain stationary, but are continuing the downward course of barbarism and decay which we have traced to a period antecedent to the visit of Alexander the Great.

This portion of the narrative must now be brought to a conclusion, for we have entered the little circle of the Present, significantly called the Day, where everything appears of such grotesque importance to the beings to whom it belongs. Lord Ellenborough was recalled for unexplained reasons, and Sir Henry Hardinge arrived at Calcutta as his successor on the 28th of February, 1844. Finding India in peace, the latter turned his attention zealously to the improvement of the country and the people; from which he was speedily to be diverted for a moment by disturbances in some portions of the Deccan inseparable from the anomalies still existing in the political condition of the country.

BOOK IV.

THE CONSTITUTION AND REGIME OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY.

CHAPTER I.

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE COMPANY FROM THE COMMENCEMENT, AT HOME AND ABROAD.

The East India Company may be looked upon as at once the most surprising and the most important Fact in the modern history of the world. We have seen its beginning, but no man can conceive its ending. When many more generations are buried in the tomb of the past; when its corporate forms are lost in those of the national government; when its navies have vanished from the face of the deep, and Asia is tremulous no more with the march of its armies, the Company will still exist in spirit and in influence, brooding over the far East, like the mighty and mystic bird of ancient story, warming

into life new feelings, new ideas, new institutions, and operating new changes in the destiny of the human race.

But it is itself only a part of that destiny which it seems to control. Its progress exhibits hardly more of volition than that of a straw dancing in the tempest. Called into being by those second causes behind which the providence of God is hidden, it has run blindly its appointed career; and when its mission is accomplished it will dissolve, with little more consciousness, into its elements. In the mean time it will be an interesting and curious task to inquire into the composition of its power and substance, and thus ascertain under what circumstances so anomalous a body has been able to preserve its consistence and its impetus amidst the revolutions of the world.

The first English traders to India were merely an association of adventurers acting with a certain degree of concert for the benefit of the whole, yet each with a separate interest depending upon his own stock. Such an association could not keep its ground against the rival companies of other European nations, and eventually the stocks of individuals were merged in one capital. But the Crown now proved a more formidable enemy at home, by granting similar licenses to individuals, and even to a rival association; till at length these two companies were blended into one, and the British trade assumed something like a regular and permanent form.

All these traders, it must be observed, had something to do with war as well as commerce; factories required military guards as much as clerks; and merchant vessels would have been of no use without a marine for convoy. In the charter granted by William III. in 1698 to the English Company before its union with the London Company, it was provided that the business should be managed

by a court of directors consisting of twenty-four members, elected by the general body; the qualification for a director being 2,000*l.* stock, and of a proprietor 500*l.* stock. The court of proprietors were to make the by-laws for adding to the stock, and deciding upon dividends, and for the general government of the trade. Ministers of the church were to be maintained at the factories, and a chaplain in every ship of five hundred tons burthen. The Company were empowered to appoint governors and other officers of their forts, and to raise troops for their defence. By Queen Anne's Act of 1702, providing for the incorporation of the two companies, it was granted to the general courts of both to have the sole management of the forts, and the right to coin foreign money in India.

Hitherto, however, the business was rudely managed, for the directors found themselves a political as well as a trading body, yet without any form of government and constitution adequate to the circumstances. The immense distance of the seat of their foreign operations rendered their officers almost independent. These func tionaries, although at first in all probability disobeyin merely such orders as had become improper through the lapse of time, ended, as might have been expected, in adopting a discretionary conduct in accordance with their own private interest or pleasure; and in 1665 a governor of Madras imprisoned the individual sent out to supersede him, and maintained his seat in defiance of the Company for three years. It is unnecessary, however, to advert in a special manner to the confusion which existed at this early period, and which continued long after the union of the two companies. It may suffice to say that the administration at home was conducted by twenty-four directors, of whom one was chairman, and another

deputy chairman, a proprietory body, and a suitable number of clerks; while the personnel of the civil service abroad, besides the governors and agents and their councils, consisted of apprentices, writers, factors, merchants, and senior merchants, all rising by seniority.

Theoretically this was a democratical body, almost the entire power residing in the proprietors, who, besides controlling the whole business, not only elected the directors, but displaced them for misgovernment. Nominally the constitution was of a mixed character, in which the court of proprietors represented the general body of the people, the court of directors an aristocratical senate, and the chairman the sovereign; the whole, as Mill says, giving "an image of the British constitution, a system in which the forms of the different species of government, the monarchical, aristocratical, and democratical are mixed and combined." Really, however, it was then, and continued to be so till the institution of the Board of Control, a pure oligarchy,—the proceedings of which were but little affected by the murmurs of the people.

But this was not an oligarchy in the offensive sense of the word, for its members were annually elected and re-elected, in a ministerial capacity, and might be deposed by the proprietors themselves. They, in fact, might be regarded in the light of the more stirring or influential spirits in a club or parish, who step forward, with the approbation of their followers, to conduct its affairs. The directors managed the business by a subdivision of labour proportioned to the magnitude and diversity of the concerns. Each had his place in a particular committee superintending a particular branch, and these committees were as follows:—

I. The Committee of Correspondence may be considered the prime moving power of the business. Its

duty was to examine advices from abroad, and draw up the answers to be laid before the Court of Directors. It reported on the number of ships required in the coming season, and suggested their proper stations; on the number of civil and military servants required for their establishments, and on the applications for leave of absence or return; on all complaints of grievances, of pecuniary demands upon the Company, on which it determined in the first instance; and on all appointments necessary for the secretaries', examiners', auditors', and military fund and auditors offices, submitting its nominations to the Court.

II. The Committee of Lawsuits, to which all matters connected with litigation were referred by the other departments. It directed prosecutions and defences, and examined and reported on law charges.

III. The Committee of Treasury provided, under orders of the Court, for the payment of dividends and the interest on bonds; negotiated loans; purchased bullion and foreign coins for exportation, and superintended their packing; affixed the Company's seal to charter-parties, covenants of officers, debentures, and other bonds; examined the balance of cash; and judged, in the first instance, of all applications on the loss of bonds, or on other money transactions, and the delivery of unregistered diamonds, bullion, &c.

IV. The Committee of Warehouses conducted generally the commercial concerns, but more especially the imports of the Company. It ordered produce according to the state of the markets at home, examined the quality and prices of such produce, determined upon the means of its conveyance to England, superintended its landing and warehousing when arrived; made arrangements for

sales, and collected and digested from time to time the opinions of experienced buyers with a view to the advantage of the trade.

V. The Committee of Accounts undertook everything connected with bills of exchange and foreign certificates; examined estimates, and accounts of cash or stock ordered by the Court, the Lords of the Treasury, or Parliament; and transacted in general the business of the accountant's office and its dependencies, and of the transfer office in which the foreign letters of attorney for the sale and transfer of the Company's stock and annuities were examined.

VI. The Committee of Buying resembled that of warehouses, but with its attention devoted to exports instead of imports, and those only of lead, woollens, and bullion. It purchased cloths in the white state; contracted for their being dyed; superintended the fine-drawing, plaining, pressing, and packing for exportation; and audited the various accounts connected therewith.

VII. The Committee of the House ordered the repairs and alterations required in the India House, regulated the attendance of clerks, appointed inferior servants, examined the quarterly accounts of disbursements, and conducted the other inferior details of economy.

VIII. The Committee of Shipping was entrusted with the purchase of such stores as were not included in the duties of the Committee of Exports. It freighted ships, and examined the qualifications of their commanders and officers; distributed the outward cargoes; superintended the raising and allotment of recruits, and their passage-money and provisions; covenanted with seamen and paid their wages; regulated the private trade outwards of the commanders and officers of the Company's ships; autho-

rized indulgences for the export of wines, &c., to the Company's servants in India; and ordered the building, repairing, and outfitting of vessels.

IX. The Committee of Private Trade adjusted the accounts of freight and demurrage on private shipments outwards; settled the claims of the owners of chartered ships; regulated the indulgence of private trade homewards; and examined the commanders of ships as to the propriety of their conduct with reference to the orders of the Company at home or of their officers abroad.

X. The Committee for Preventing the Growth of Private Trade was supplementary to that department of the preceding committee which regulated the indulgence of private trade. Its duty was to investigate and determine upon such business as might arise in consequence of the regulations for limiting the allowance of trade to commanders and officers of Company's ships being exceeded.

"This review," says Bruce, who gives the above in substance from an official paper, "of the manner in which the domestic administration of the directors is portioned out among regular or standing committees, furnishes a curious and interesting report of the progress of the Company's affairs, and leads directly to the improvements which have occurred on the subject to the directors themselves."

In India there were three presidencies, Bombay, Madras, and Calcutta, each independent of the other, and directly responsible to the Company at home. The administration was composed of a president, and an indefinite number of councillors, all appointed by the Company; and the salaries of these functionaries was for a long period extremely small,—a councillor, even when the English had become powerful in Bengal, having

only 250*l.* per annum. The advantages of the Company's servants abroad arose from trade; and as the president had the privilege of appointing them to such localities as he chose, whether favourable or unfavourable for that purpose, he possessed an indirect control over their emoluments. This control was exercised in a still more stringent manner by both president and council over the inferior officers; while other subjects of Great Britain were liable to be seized, imprisoned, and transported back to England by the same irresistible power.

The denominations of the inferior servants distinguished at this period as well as later both the relative importance of their duties, and their period of service. A writer was simply a junior clerk, formerly termed an apprentice; after serving five years he became a factor; in three years a junior merchant; and in three years more a senior merchant. From the last-mentioned class the councillors were taken according to seniority. Before the union of the two companies it had been in some degree the custom of the European merchants to carry the commodities imported from Europe to the towns of the interior for sale; but the confusion incidental to the dissolution of the Mogul empire compelled the English to concentrate themselves upon the coast. On the sites chosen for emporia they built warehouses, counting-houses, and lodging apartments, which were collectively called Factories; and these it became necessary to fortify, the inmates discharging the duty of a garrison.* The

* The factors from whom these establishments took their name, were originally supercargoes, and were divided into four classes, the designations given above being comparatively modern. At the first voyage of the London Adventurers in 1600 there were thirty-six factors, the first class being allowed 100*l.* for equipment, and 200*l.* as an adventure; the second class 50*l.* for equipment and 100*l.* for adventure; the third class 30*l.* for equipment and 50*l.* for adventure; and the fourth class 20*l.* for equipment

cargoes destined for Europe were collected by the Company's agents throughout the country and placed in those depôts till vessels were ready for their conveyance; natives gathered round, of course, to participate in the wealth such transactions disseminated; and thus by degrees the principal factories of the Company grew into presidencies, and the presidencies into important towns, defended by regular fortresses and professional troops.

But the grand defect of the system was the almost irresponsible power of the Company's principal servants; and the abuses which this led to were aggravated by the emoluments of the officers depending upon anything rather than the functions of government entrusted to them. These evils were unconsciously increased by the administration at home, which, confounded by the distance, was timid in its orders, and irresolute in their execution.

So early as 1624 (just after the massacre of Amboyna) the power of martial law had been entrusted to the Company; and in 1661 the exercise of civil and criminal jurisdiction in their factories according to the laws of England.

As might be expected, under such circumstances as we have described, the higher officers grew rich and the Company poor; and in 1760, on the arrival of a new governor at Calcutta, he found the treasury empty and the troops on the brink of mutiny for want of pay. At this time, Clive and three of his council wrote to the

and 40*l.* for adventure. They gave security for their punctuality, and for their abstinence from private trade. Five vessels were taken up for the voyage, comprising in the whole one thousand five hundred tons burthen, and five hundred men. A captain of one of these vessels was allowed 100*l.* wages, and 200*l.* on credit for an adventure; together with a bonus of from 500*l.* to 2,000*l.* contingent on the profits amounting to from two hundred to five hundred per centum.

directors, "that the diction of their letter was unworthy of both parties, in whatever relation considered, either as masters to servants, or gentlemen to gentlemen;" and asserted that from their improper interference "private views would now take the lead in India *from examples at home*, and no gentlemen hold the service longer, or exert themselves further in it, than their own exigencies required." In reply to such "gross insults and indignities," the directors ordered the councillors to be dismissed and sent home.

The Company had early obtained exemption from the transit duties which burthened the trade of the interior; and as their servants grew in independence and audacity, they made no scruple of employing the corporate passport to cover their own private adventures. They thus got into their hands almost the entire trade of Bengal, for no native merchant could withstand such competition; and at length, when the toll collectors questioned the authority of the British talisman, a party of sepoys was sent to seize the offender and carry him to the nearest factory. The nabob grew desperate. He had no recourse against fraud and violence; for a majority of the council upheld the enormities by means of which they accumulated vast fortunes, and he saw his industrious subjects daily sinking into poverty and despair. He at length resolved to relinquish the transit duties altogether, and thus place natives and foreigners upon the same footing; but this would not suit the purpose of the Company's servants, who had the unheard-of insolence to insist not only upon their being exempted from such burthens themselves, but upon all others being subjected to them! It is hardly necessary to say that these proceedings met with the indignant reprobation of the directors at home, for in point of fact the interest of the Company

and that of their servants was diametrically opposed upon the question.

Another means by which individuals enriched themselves at the expense of character to the Company, was the appropriation of presents received from the chiefs of the country. The custom of bespeaking the favour of persons in power by a gift of money was so general in India that no disgrace was attached to its acceptance; but to such an extent did the cupidity of the British go that there is good reason to believe that the total amount received by private persons in the three years of revolution in Bengal from 1757 to 1760, was several millions sterling. When Clive was sent out anew in 1764, he found the affairs of the Company "in a condition so nearly desperate as would have alarmed any set of men whose sense of honour and duty to their employers had not been estranged by the too eager pursuit of their own immediate advantage. The sudden, and among many the unwarrantable acquisition of riches had introduced luxury in every shape and in its most pernicious excess. These two enormous evils went hand in hand together throughout the whole presidency infecting almost every member of each department. Every inferior seemed to have grasped at wealth that he might be enabled to assume the spirit of profusion which was now the only distinction between him and his superior. Thus all distinction ceased, and every rank became in a manner upon an equality." The directors described, in terms quite as strong, their "sense of the deplorable state to which their affairs were on the point of being reduced, from the corruption and rapacity of their servants, and the universal depravity of manners throughout the settlement. The general relaxation of all discipline and obedience, both military and civil, was hastily tending to a dissolution of

all government. The vast fortunes acquired in the inland trade had been obtained by a scene of the most tyrannic and oppressive conduct that ever was known in any age or country."

These monstrous evils led to the prohibition of the inland trade, and of the acceptance of presents by their officers exceeding 400*l.* in amount, but their orders on this subject were treated in India with the most contemptuous disregard. The trade, so far from being abandoned, was placed on a more advantageous footing. It was confined to three great articles, salt, betel nut, and tobacco, of which a monopoly was established for the exclusive benefit of the governor and other principal officers; and this continued for three years, notwithstanding the indignant fulminations of the directors. At this time, it should be remarked, the official salary of a councillor was only 250*l.*, while house rent for a person of that station was 200*l.*

These dissensions at length led to the interposition of Parliament, and in 1773, a fundamental change took place in the constitution of the Company; the preamble of the act stating, that "whereas the several powers and authorities by charters to the United Company of merchants trading to the East Indies, have been found by experience not to have sufficient force and efficacy to prevent various abuses which have prevailed in the government and administration of the affairs of the said United Company, as well at home as in India, to the manifest injury of the public credit, and of the commercial interests of the said Company; and it is therefore become highly expedient that certain further regulations better adapted to their present circumstances and condition should be provided and established."

By this act it was decreed that instead of twenty-four

directors being elected for one year, there should be chosen at the next general election only six for that space, six for two years, six for three years, and six for four years; and that thenceforward only six should be elected annually. The qualification of a proprietor to vote was increased from 500*l.* to 1000*l.*; and persons holding 3000*l.* stock were entitled to two votes, 6000*l.* to three votes, and 10,000*l.* to four votes. The government of Bengal, Bahar and Orissa, was vested in a governor-general, with a salary of 25,000*l.* and four councillors with 8000*l.* each; and to this government the presidencies of Madras and Bombay were made subservient. A supreme court of judicature was established at Calcutta, presided over by a chief justice with a salary of 8000*l.* a year, and three other judges with 6000*l.* a year, all appointed by the Crown. Patronage was allowed to rest in the hands of the Company, who, after the first appointments under the new act, were to appoint the governor and councils, though subject to the approbation of the Crown. Everything in the Company's correspondence from India relating to civil or military affairs, to the government of the country, or the administration of the revenues, was to be laid before the ministry. No person, either in the service of the King or Company, was to receive presents; and the governor-general, the council, and judges were excluded from trade.

The indignation of the Company at this interference with their very existence as an independent body was unbounded; but nevertheless, in 1781, they were compelled to submit to further encroachments. In addition to submitting their correspondence *from* India to the minister, they were now required to communicate to him all the dispatches they sent *out* relating to the revenue, and their civil and military affairs; and to be governed by

his directions in matters of peace and war, and generally in their transactions with foreign powers.

In 1783, Mr. Fox introduced a bill providing that the directors of the Company should be chosen, not by the owners of the stock, but by the House of Commons!—but this gave way to Mr. Pitt's bill of the following year, which passed into a law on the 13th of August, and established a permanent alliance between the Government and the Company. This, although canvassed with great violence at the time, was nothing more than a following out of the existing regulation that the Indian correspondence should be submitted to the minister. Of what practical use was this submission, unless the latter had the power of *control* in those proceedings of which he disapproved?*

The principle upon which this bill proceeded was, that during the remaining years of the Company's charter, Parliament, for the general advantage of the empire, should have the power of superintending and controlling the management of the affairs in the East Indies, but leave with the directors and proprietors the enjoyment of their existing privileges. The king was empowered to appoint six privy councillors as commissioners for the affairs of India, of whom one of the secretaries of state was president, and in his absence the chancellor of the exchequer, and in the absence of both the senior commissioner according to the date of his appointment. These commissioners held office during the royal pleasure; and three of them constituted a board, the duty of which was to "superintend, direct, and control all acts, operations, and concerns relating to the civil or military government or

* The abstract of the Act, which follows, is in some places nearly in the words of Bruce, in his Historical View of Plans for the Government of British India.

revenues of the British territorial possessions in the East Indies;" the commissioners taking an oath to execute "the several trusts reposed in them according to the best of their skill and judgment, without favour or affection, prejudice or malice, to any person whatever." The secretary and other officers were nominated by the president, and they were to take an oath of secrecy in such terms as the Board might direct. The acceptance of the trust did not disqualify the commissioners or the secretary from holding a seat in Parliament.

The board was allowed access to all records and papers belonging to the Company, and the directors were required to deliver to them copies of all resolutions, orders, minutes, and proceedings of their own, or of the proprietors, in so far as related to the government or revenues of British India, within eight days after the courts were held; and also immediate copies of all the despatches which the directors or Secret Committee received from India. Copies of all letters, orders, and instructions intended to be sent to their servants abroad were laid before the board of commissioners, who were bound to return them within fourteen days, subscribed by three of the members signifying their assent or dissent, with their reasons for the latter. The directors had the power of remonstrating on the subject of any alterations proposed by the board; but the ultimate decision of the latter was to be carried into effect, allowing the directors, however, in any matter not connected with government or revenue, the right of appeal to the king in council.

In affairs which might be supposed to demand secrecy, such as levying war or making peace, or negotiating with foreign states, the orders of the board might be addressed to the Secret Committee of the directors, who

were to forward them to India without disclosing their nature to the Court; and the answers, in like manner, reached the commissioners through the sole medium of the Secret Committee.

The Secret Committee was established as a part of the domestic government of the Company, and consisted of three members of the Court of Directors. Its duty was to transmit and return documents as above, and to give authority for carrying the orders of the board into effect.

The government of Bengal, it was decreed, should consist of a Governor-General and three councillors; the commander-in-chief of the forces having precedence next to the Governor-General. The governments of Madras and Bombay were vested in a president and three councillors, appointed by the directors, the governor having the casting vote. The king might recall any of these or other officers, civil or military, including the Governor-General, by a writing under his sign manual. The directors had the same privilege; but when exercised by the sovereign, intimation was to be given to the Company eight days previously. The directors retained the right of filling up vacancies, but only for the covenanted servants of the Company; except in the case of Governors-General, presidents, or commanders-in-chief, whom they might choose from any other class of British subjects. The commanders-in-chief were not to succeed to the office of Governor-General or president, otherwise than by the express appointment of the directors; but if these omitted to supply such vacancy, the privilege might be exercised by the king,—and in this case the power of recall rested with his Majesty. In the case of a vacancy in the council, the senior servant succeeded till a nomination should be made by

the directors. The orders of the directors on these and other subjects, when approved by the commissioners, could not be revoked by the court of proprietors.

The governor-general in council was empowered to exercise a control over the other governments of the Company abroad, in all points that related to the native states, to questions of peace and war, the application of revenue, and in general in every case not specially withdrawn from his superintendence by instructions from the directors or the secret committee.

In the deliberations of the Indian councils the business introduced by the governor-general or presidents was to receive precedence, and then the motions of the counsellors. The former might postpone or adjourn a discussion during forty-eight hours, but not more than twice, except with the consent of the council or of the mover.

The governor-general and council were prohibited from declaring war without the express authority of the directors or secret committee, except when hostilities had actually commenced, or preparations had actually been made for their commencement, either against the British natives in India or such allies and dependants as were guaranteed in their territories by the Company. The war was not to be declared against any other power than the immediate aggressor; and no treaty of guarantee could be entered into with any other state, except in the case of such state assisting the Company in repelling the hostilities. The presidents of the subordinate settlements were restricted in the same manner, except in cases of urgency, or of special orders from the governor-general, the directors, or the secret committee; but all treaties entered into by them were, if possible, to receive the sanction of the governor-general and council. Disobedience in this respect might be punished by suspension from

office by an order from the supreme government, to whom copies of all acts in council were to be transmitted, together with intelligence on all affairs of moment.

The act further enjoined the directors to adopt measures for retrenching expenses, regulating promotions according to seniority, and laying annually before parliament lists of all offices in India with the emoluments annexed to them. The age at which writers or cadets might be appointed was fixed to be from fifteen to twenty-two.

The acceptance of presents from the natives was prohibited by the act. Disobedience to the orders of the directors was declared a misdemeanour at law.

All persons returning from India were required to give an inventory of their property; they were to be examined upon the subject personally upon oath, and for false statement were subjected to the penalty of imprisonment and incapacitation from future employment.

A new tribunal was instituted "for the prosecution and bringing to speedy and condign punishment British subjects guilty of extortion and all misdemeanours, while holding office in the service of the king or Company in India." The court consisted of one judge from each of the common law courts in Westminster Hall, four peers, and six members of the House of Commons. Witnesses were compelled under pain of fine or imprisonment to attend; and their testimony given in India before the competent judges was received as legal evidence.

Such were the more material points of the act in which the present mode of conducting the home government of India originated; but the various changes which have since been made were commenced in two years from the date at which it was passed. Persons nominated to be members of council were then required to have been twelve years

resident in India in the civil service of the Company. Instead of the senior servant succeeding as of right to a vacancy in the council, the governor and presidents were vested with the power of selecting a successor from civil officers of twelve years standing, provided no provisional successor had been nominated by the directors. The commanders-in-chief might be appointed by the directors to be governors, presidents, and members of council; but they were deprived of the enjoyment of a seat in council by virtue of their office. The governors and presidents received the power of carrying any measure into effect, notwithstanding the dissent of the members of council; the latter, after recording their reasons for dissent, being obliged to sign the orders of their superior to give them full validity. This power, however, was not to extend to judicial cases, nor to the suspension of general rules or orders, nor to the imposition of taxes or duties. A residence in the settlement of three years was required as a qualification for a salary exceeding 500*l.*; of six years for 1500*l.*; of nine years for 3000*l.*; and of twelve years for 4000*l.* The secret committee and their transcribers were required to take an oath of secresy. The directors were endowed with the power of nominating the governor-general and council upon their own authority. The odious and tyrannical regulation rendering it obligatory upon persons returning from India to give an inventory of their fortune was repealed.

It has been said Mr. Fox's bill, which proposed to transfer the authority of the twenty-four directors of the Company to seven commissioners appointed by Parliament, was not more subversive of the real power of the body than Pitt's bill, which placed a controlling power over their transactions in the hands of government. This view, we shall find, was not practically correct; although

that it was not so is more owing perhaps to the delicacy of ministers than to any want of stringency in the law. At the first collision between the Court of Directors and the Board of Control, relative to a reprimand intended to be conveyed by the former to one of their officers abroad, the latter yielded; although they took care at the same time to intimate that their acquiescence was not to be regarded as any relinquishment of their real authority. Again, in 1788, on a disagreement arising as to the dispatch of troops to India, although Parliament affirmed the power of the Board of Control, the minister found it expedient to introduce certain clauses limiting its discretion as to the number of troops, and as to other matters connected with preceding questions.

We have now, however, described, as briefly as possible, the grand changes through which the Company proceeded towards their present condition, and it is not our object to enter into minor details. We shall accordingly pass over the charter of 1793, as not introducing any remarkable alterations, and go on to give a view of the existing constitution and regime.

While addressing ourselves to the task, it is impossible not to be struck with the idea of *fatality* which runs throughout the whole history of the Company. We find the struggles of this body against the greatness which was thrust upon them—their anxious attempts to confine themselves to the trading operations which were the original object of their existence — utterly vain. Circumstances forced them on to political power, and their own servants, whom they selected to check an impetus which at once terrified and enraged them, merely directed its course. Still trade—trade—trade was their dream. They had conquered India for the advantage of commerce, and had so completely identified themselves

with the great business which was the result of their labour for two hundred years, that the one, as they fondly imagined, could not exist without the other. When compelled to give up a certain tonnage in their vessels to other merchants, the sacrifice seemed rather ridiculous than formidable—and so it really was; but when called upon by the voice of the nation in 1813 to abandon altogether their monopoly of the Indian trade, they looked upon it as a prophecy of the end of the commercial world, and a voice arose from Leadenhall-street as wild and sad as that which once wailed on the African shore—Delenda est Carthago! But the sacrifice was made; the ungrateful business they had abandoned sprang up with the vigour and exultation of a captive who has escaped from his bonds; and there was no avoiding their final doom. In ten years more they were stripped of the China and tea trade, the last remains of their commercial greatness; and the United Company of Merchants of England trading to the East Indies, casting many a lingering look behind, found themselves—God knows how — nothing more than the sovereigns of a mighty empire!

By the present charter of the 28th of August, 1833, the commercial functions of the Company were brought to a close; their real and personal property was declared to be held in trust for the Crown for the service of India; and their debts and liabilities were charged on that country. A dividend of $10\frac{1}{2}$ per centum was to continue to be paid on their capital, but redeemable by Parliament after April, 1854, on the payment of 200*l.* for every 100*l.* stock. The present value of the stock is from 288*l.* to 299*l.* for 100*l.* If the Company were deprived of the government of India at the termination of their charter on the 30th of April, 1854, they might demand redemption of

their stock; but to secure this redemption at one period or other they were required themselves to pay out of their existing assets two millions sterling into a Security Fund, to accumulate at the rate of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per centum interest and compound interest, till it should reach the necessary amount, twelve millions.

The Lord President of the Council, the Lord Privy Seal, the First Lord of the Treasury, the principal Secretaries of State, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, were declared to be *ex officio* members of the Board of Control, but without salaries. Two secretaries were appointed instead of one. Besides these there is an assistant secretary, and heads of the accounts and foreign department, the military department, the public department, the judicial department, and the registrarship. All powers of the Court of Directors were made subject to the control of this board, except patronage; and even that is shared by courtesy with the president, who is allowed twice the number of nominations to the civil and military colleges which are made by a director. In the former institution candidates must not be under seventeen nor above twenty-one years of age; in the latter they must not be under fourteen nor above eighteen. A chaplain must not exceed forty, nor an assistant surgeon twenty-two. The cadets of the civil service are classed according to merit on leaving the college, and they receive promotion in India according to the place they hold on the list.

No fresh changes of any importance were made by the Act in the Home Government, which continues to be carried on, under the superintendence of the Board of Control, by twenty-four directors elected by the body of proprietors. Comparisons are frequently drawn between its constitution and that of the foreign govern-

ment, and always in favour of the latter; but it seems to be forgotten that the machinery for governing India abroad has been constructed at home. It may be very true that the directors are not chosen with sufficient care by the proprietors, and that they rarely represent in due proportions the civil, military, legal, and mercantile interests; but somehow or other the system, it cannot be denied, has worked well. This ill-chosen body has won for the country a great empire, and it has formed for it a plan of government superior to anything of the kind the world ever saw, or will probably ever see again. It preserved the territories it had acquired in the midst of disasters which in the west stripped Great Britain of her most important colonies; and at the peace of 1783, when she retired, humbled and well nigh beggared, from her contest with France, Spain, Holland, and revolted America, it presented to her India, not only safe and intact but increased in trade and territory, the most important dependency the nation now possessed.

It was this which led to an examination of the stewardship of the directors, and to the ultimate decision of the Legislature to seize upon the control of the new and flourishing empire. The mode in which it was done exhibited neither gratitude nor generosity; but that is of little consequence, since India continues to flourish as before. Under the new arrangement the directors sunk into the mere executive power acting under the orders of the government; but retaining, as they did, various important privileges, this power was by no means unsubstantial—a fact which they have lately evidenced in a very remarkable manner by deposing a Governor-General in spite of all the efforts of ministers to save him. It was at first supposed that the Board of Control would usurp all real authority, and that even the

appointments of the directors would be made in deference to its wishes; but this does not appear to have been the case in practice. In reasoning upon such probabilities, we generally give too little weight to national character and the influence of opinion.

The directors still manage their business by means of committees, but these have been modified by the changes that have taken place in the affairs of the Company. First, there is the Secret Committee, consisting of the chairman, the deputy-chairman, and the senior director for the time being; second, the Committee of the Finance and Home departments; third, the Committee of the Political and Military departments; and fourth, the Committee of the Revenue, Judicial, and Legislative departments. These committees consist of from seven to eight directors, besides the chairman and deputy-chairman of the court, who are *ex-officio* chairman and deputy-chairman of every committee. The most important state affairs are confined to the Secret Committee. One of the members is the senior director, who has an opportunity of reading the records for four years successively; and though one year out of office, he returns again to his seat in the Committee.

The chairman of the Company is *ex-officio* chairman of all the committees. An abstract of every despatch from India has to be submitted to him, and after taking it into consideration in conjunction with the deputy, their joint opinion, with the draft of the answer, is in due course of time laid for approval before the Board of Control, in the shape of a "C. C." or confidential communication. When the document has been submitted by the clerk of the department to the president, and he has become as familiar with the subject as circumstances admit, the chairman and deputy-chairman are summoned to appear

at Cannon Row, and there the "C. C.," or confidential communication takes place, face to face, and the case is decided. This ended, the abstract of the despatch from India, with the proposed reply already determined upon, is now submitted by the chairman *ex-officio* to the committee to whose department it belongs, that the document may undergo the ceremony of perusal by each member, and receive the impress of his initials previously to its coming formally before the body of directors in court assembled, in order to be passed and issued.

The principal defect in the routine of business is in the Board of Control, where everything is practically left to the assistant-secretary and clerks of the department; the president and his two secretaries coming new into office on a change of ministry. The same thing is no doubt the case in the other departments of government; but independently of the immeasurable superiority of the other parts of the Company's system, there is not one of these departments which might not be managed—and well managed—by a man of sense and integrity, however ignorant previously of the details. India, on the contrary, is a sealed book to all but the initiated.

The salary of the directors is nominal, being only 300*l.* per annum; and being men of independent fortune, their remuneration of course consists in the patronage they are able to bestow upon their friends and dependants, in the feeling of power, and the gratification of ambition. The proprietors give them little trouble; the long speeches we hear of in the newspapers being usually pronounced to thin audiences, and exciting little attention beyond the precincts of the India-house. These general courts, however, the democratical element in the constitution of the Company, are by no means without their utility. They answer the usual purposes of public opinion, and

probably exercise an amount of influence over the directors which is suspected by neither party.

The government abroad is vested in the Governor-General in Council. The council consists of four ordinary members, three of whom must be civil or military servants of the Company of at least ten years' standing—if military, not at the time holding any command; and one, not a servant of the Company, and appointed with the approbation of the sovereign. The commander-in-chief may be appointed an extraordinary member, holding rank next to the Governor-General. The Governor-General in Council has the power, under certain restrictions, of making laws which have the force of Acts of Parliament, if not disallowed by the Court of Directors. When the Governor-General differs with his council in any matter of importance they are required to exchange written statements of their several reasons; and if the difference still continues, the former is at liberty to act on his own authority and responsibility. The council may be assembled by the Governor-General in either of the other presidencies, in which case the local governor is *ex-officio* an extraordinary member.

The executive government of the presidencies consists of a governor and three councillors, who have not the privilege of making laws, or of creating any new office without the sanction of the Governor-General in Council.

In the case of a vacancy for which a successor has not been provisionally appointed by the directors, the place of the Governor-General, or of the governor of a presidency, is supplied by the senior member of council; and vacancies in the councils are filled by the governor in council.

Any servant of the Company may be removed either by the Crown or the directors.

The salaries of the government are as follows:—The Governor-General of India, 24,000*l.*; each member of his council, 9,600*l.*; a governor of a presidency, 12,000*l.*; each member of his council, 6,000*l.* The allowance for equipment and voyage are 5,000*l.* for the Governor-General; 1,200*l.* for each of his councillors; and 2,500*l.* for a presidential governor.

The directors, as we have seen, have the privilege of sending out of their own authority nearly the whole of the juvenile servants, and even the Governor-General with the approbation of government; but *in* India the patronage is divided among the high officers, civil and military. But this patronage is under severe control. In the military service promotion takes place by seniority; in the civil service by seniority and merit. If a junior servant is placed over the head of a senior one without substantial cause, the latter remonstrates; a correspondence takes place with the department; and the whole is sent home for the consideration of the directors. "The Governor-General," says Count Bjornstjerna, "has the chief command over the land and naval forces, and he may promote, as well as suspend, every civil officer throughout the East Indian empire!" This erroneous view of the Indian government is too frequently taken; but in reality such powers of the Governor-General are under strict and wholesome control.

The residents at the native courts resemble the Governor-General in a more confined sphere. Holding a state not inferior to that of many sovereign princes, they are yet merely the helpless agents of a system which appears to act like a mysterious and uncontrollable destiny upon every one whom it enfolds. They must chronicle, day by day, not only the proceedings of their mission, but even the casual speeches that are made at an

audience—all must go to Calcutta. They are not only spies themselves but surrounded by spies, whom even their acts of justice may convert into enemies. In the case of disobedience to orders they do not merely lose their appointment—they have been guilty of a misdemeanour punishable by the laws of England. But neither they nor the meanest servant of the Company can suffer without appeal. Everything is the subject of correspondence with the Indian government, and every line of this correspondence must go before the home government. Whether these voluminous papers really pass under the review of the directors we cannot tell; but the effect of the check which their transmission imposes is indubitable. The Governor-General before his arrival is quite unconnected with India and its parties or intrigues; he has no interest in practising or permitting injustice; but, on the contrary, he is certain of detection in the event of his doing so. The directors are twenty-four gentlemen of independent, generally of large fortunes, only 300*l.* per annum of which is contingent upon their seats in the court; and they are not only under the control of each other, but liable every moment to be brought before the bar of public opinion. The proprietors have no more personal interest in the government or misgovernment of India than any other class of the people. Their dividends, secured upon the territorial revenues, are safe whatever happens; and with the generosity which invariably characterises a popular assembly in England, their voice is never heard but on the side of those whom they believe to be oppressed or unfortunate.

This remarkable constitution, the produce of successive years and transmitted experience, has not received any practical modification from the Board of Control. Government has hitherto confined its interference to poli-

tical measures, leaving alone the machinery by which these are executed. But even in political measures it is unreasonable to suppose that they do more than advise with the directors, whose knowledge, as a body, of the country and its relations must be infinitely superior to that of the whole ministry together. That it was full time for a connection to take place between the Company and the State, when the territories won by the former had become the most important dependency of the British Crown, can hardly be disputed; but the Board of Commissioners was theoretically an error in so far as the stringency of its control is concerned, however far this may have been modified in practice by the good sense of the individuals forming the government.

CHAPTER II.

THE ARMY AND MARINE OF THE COMPANY.

It is usual for despotism to fall between the army, with the aristocracy at its head, and the people. As soon as the nobles become too strong by concentrating permanently around them the troops they had originally levied for the purposes of the king, the latter appeals for aid to another power, hitherto despised by both, and which eventually destroys the tyranny by whose selfish policy it was fostered. This could not take place in India; because there the people did not exist, and owing to the circumstances already described, could not be called into being by a process rapid enough to answer the views of an individual or a generation. The aristocracy, therefore, destroyed the monarchical power, and continued to ravage rather than govern the country by their conflicting armies, till quelled in their turn by a superior and foreign force. We have described the procedure and exploits of this force, and the nature and constitution of the body

by which it was directed: it is now time to inquire into its composition and history.

The first troops employed by the Company were desperate and worthless adventurers who had no sense of military honour, and no attachment to the service but that of pay, and who were frequently as ready to desert to the other European companies as to defend the one to which they had sworn fidelity. "They consisted," says Lord Clive, "of the refuse of our gaols, commanded by an officer seldom above the rank of lieutenant, and but in one or two instances with that of major, without order, discipline, or military ardour." But they were not all the refuse of the gaols—they were composed also of European deserters from the Portuguese, Dutch, and French settlements, Topasses (or Indo-Portuguese) and slaves from the Company's stations on the eastern coast of Africa. Their number was for a considerable time extremely small; the important factory of Armegon being defended in 1628, by twenty-eight soldiers, and in 1652. Madras, twelve years after the foundation of Fort St. George, having a garrison of only twenty-six besides some Caffres. In 1676, it was directed that the garrison of Fort St. George should consist entirely of English, but it does not appear that professional soldiers were even then considered indispensable, as only a few years before the complement required was filled up from the ships.

In 1676 the custom of training civil servants to the use of arms was prohibited, and the pay of soldiers was established at one guinea per month, on which they were required to support themselves in provisions and other necessaries. In addition to this they were allowed a bonus some years after of ten fanams monthly (a fanam being the twelfth part of a rupee) on completing seven years' service. This was the term for which they were engaged,

and the bonus was intended as an inducement to the men to re-enlist.

In 1681-2, the Company having been authorized by Act of Parliament to seize and send home all interlopers in their trade, and a body of those adventurers having established themselves at Hooghly, "an expedition" was despatched thither from Fort St. George, consisting of thirty soldiers under "an ensign of tried courage and fidelity"—the first English troops that were seen in Bengal. In a very short time, however, the Company were engaged in war with the Mogul, and in 1686 fought and won their first battle with the Indians in Bengal. The president acted at once as admiral and commander-in-chief; and in Madras the president and senior councillor were captains, the highest professional officer being a lieutenant. At this time a troop of horse and a company of artillery were entirely composed of civil servants.

Till 1798 the Company's troops were scattered among their factories in small detachments or independent companies, but in that year they appear to have been organised on the Coromandel coast into a regular battalion.

The troops were originally armed with muskets, pikes from fourteen to sixteen feet long, and swords. The musketeers were divided on each flank, with the pikemen round the standard of the Company in the centre. In 1665, of a company consisting of one hundred men, sixty were armed with muskets, ten with light firelocks, and thirty with long pikes; each man carrying a sword, and those armed with fire-arms a dagger made to fit like a modern bayonet into the end of the musket. The captains of companies carried pikes, the lieutenants partisans, the ensigns half-pikes, and the sergeants halberds —all wearing swords. In the beginning of the following

century the use of pikes in the ranks was abolished, and the soldiers armed with muskets, bayonets, and swords; the officers carrying spontoons in addition to their side-arms. A broad buff belt went round the waist, to which were attached the bayonet and sword; while another passing over the left shoulder and the ends meeting on the right hip served to carry the leather pouch in which the ammunition was contained. When the companies were formed into a regular battalion a grenadier company was established (so called from the largest and stoutest men having been accustomed to carry hand-grenades in addition to their other arms), and swords were then abolished, except in the case of the officers, who now carried light fusils in addition, the sergeants retaining their halberds. In 1786 the officers laid aside the fusils, and in 1796 the non-commissioned officers of light companies adopted it, together with the bayonet, in lieu of the halberd. In 1828 all the non-commissioned together made the same exchange; and in 1838 an improved double-sighted musket was introduced with spring-bayonet. The percussion-lock is the last alteration, and will no doubt become general throughout the Indian army. Field pieces, worked by the men, were attached to each battalion from the commencement, and were retained till the close of the last century.

When the sepoys were first formed into independent companies a European sergeant was attached to each, and as battalions were formed a drill-sergeant and sergeant-major were added to each battalion of natives. When the battalions were regimented, and officered from the army the company-sergeants were dispensed with, and a sergeant-major and a quarter-master-sergeant were the sole European non-commissioned officers in each native corps.

After the Company acquired their territorial possessions in Bengal, large military establishments were formed both there and in the Peninsula, and at length the boast of Clive was realized, that "their armies were equal to those of any European monarch in number, discipline, and skill." The Bengal, Coromandel, and Malabar force were kept totally distinct from each other, a cadet going out to one being incapable of being transferred to another without the express permission of the directors. When the troops acted in a body, however, the senior officer in rank, without distinction of presidency, assumed the command of the whole. The army was composed for the most part of sepoy corps led on by Europeans; and permission was accordingly given to the soldiers of royal regiments returning from India to enlist in the Company's service, and royal officers were encouraged in like manner to accept of commissions both in their army and marine. No distinction was made between the native and European corps. The cadet was promoted to either as his seniority entitled him and as vacancies occurred, and an officer frequently passed from one to another.

The sepoys, in addition to their European officers, had their own native officers, who were responsible to the former for the conduct of the men. By them offences were tried and punished, and the soldiers became readily and zealously attached to a service in which their pay was good and regular, and their customs and prejudices respected. The battalions were composed, as equally as it could be accomplished, of Hindoos and Mahomedans. The military force of each presidency was formed into brigades, each with its proportion of field-officers; and at length the command of the sepoy corps, changed in discipline and character, became

an object of ambition, and the European corps were assigned to the younger officers. This placed the native troops at once upon an equality with the European; and indeed in the history of their united military operations it would be difficult to say which of them exhibited the greater ardour and fidelity.

At the conclusion of the war of 1784 the Bengal establishment comprehended of Europeans nine hundred and thirty-eight officers and four thousand four hundred and forty-six non-commissioned officers and privates; with forty-nine thousand three hundred and ninety natives,—in all, fifty-four thousand seven hundred and seventy-four men. The Madras consisted of five hundred and ninety-six officers and three thousand four hundred and ninety-four non-commissioned officers and privates, Europeans; with thirty-seven thousand and eighty-five natives,—in all, forty-one thousand one hundred and seventy-five men. The Bombay was composed of two hundred and forty-three officers and two thousand and forty non-commissioned officers and privates, Europeans; with fourteen thousand three hundred and ninety-six natives,—in all, sixteen thousand six hundred and seventy-nine men. Thus the whole of the Company's military establishment, about thirty years after the battle of Plassey, amounted to one hundred and twelve thousand six hundred and twenty-eight men; placing an army, including the royal forces then serving in India, of about one hundred and twenty-four thousand regular troops at their disposal. The total expense of supporting this force, including the batta or double pay given to officers in the field, according to accounts laid before Parliament, appears to have amounted to four millions sterling. Since that period the number of troops in the Company's service has varied according to the circum-

stances of the country. Before 1826 there was an effective force of two hundred and seventy-four thousand men; which had diminished in 1837 to one hundred and ninety thousand, exclusive of contingent or subsidiary troops; and then again was raised in the following year to two hundred and three thousand. The Affghan war between 1838 and 1842 added fifty thousand men. The cost of the military establishment was, in 1830, stated in the Parliamentary papers at nine and a quarter millions. The whole ordinary annual charge of a sepoy regiment is reckoned in round numbers at 40,000*l.*, and that of a European regiment at twice the sum.

The Company is at the entire expense of the royal troops serving in India, and since 1822 have paid besides 60,000*l.* per annum for their retiring pay, pensions, &c. Formerly considerable jealousies existed between the two services, the King's forces complaining that those of the Company were better paid and had all the profitable stations assigned to them; and the latter that the King's officers took precedence without regard to seniority, so that a Company's captain of many years' standing and thorough experience of the country and the people was liable to be commanded by a royal captain on his first appearance in India. At length, in 1796, the Indian army was reformed on the model of the royal army, and its officers, receiving local commissions, took rank in every respect with the officers of the Crown.

Up to this period each battalion of native infantry had its native commandant, with whom rested the chief patronage of the corps, the European officers rising in their own line. This arrangement brought into the service Hindoos of rank, who surrounded themselves with protegés of good family and caste, and sometimes influential natives were seen with commissions who had

never served in the ranks at all. These officers had great power over their men, and were looked up to with a respect not dependent upon military character; but by the silent operation of the change of 1796 they were entirely done away with, and a new constitution given to the native army.

By the new organisation, every corps of infantry consisting of one thousand men was formed into ten companies with two native officers attached to each. Two such corps were embodied into a regiment, denominated first and second battalions, with the complement of half the number of European officers to each battalion that were allowed to the royal army; and the promotion took place in succession in the regiment instead of in the line as heretofore. One or two European field-officers now stood appointed to the corps, and the influence of the native commandant, formerly so essential to the character of the battalion, was considered to be detrimental, if not mischievous, and the office was abolished. The native regiments were accordingly transferred entirely to the management of European officers. These were no longer selected for their qualifications, but came out fresh from England, and had to learn their duty after their arrival. No native officer could hold the command of a company while any European officer was without one; and thus the junior European ensign commanded the senior native officer in the regiment, whatever were the merits and service of the latter,—and the care which these native veterans used to take of the European boys, towards whom they evinced no jealousy, has often been a matter of wonder and admiration. The patronage of promotion thus taken out of the hands of the native officers and placed in those of very young and often inexperienced Europeans, totally changed the character

of the former class. Henceforward, promotion in the native ranks was directed to proceed as far as possible according to seniority, the favourite principle throughout the Company's army, and little regard was paid to the respectability of family or caste of those selected for preferment.

The native officers were now promoted from the ranks, and a race of sergeants took the place of the men who had formerly entered the army from motives of honour and ambition. Their allurement is sixpence a day and the chances of the service. They toil through many a year as sentry, and gradually acquire, perhaps after their best days are over, a commission and a pay of about 30*l.* a year, not more than equal to that of the messman or butler of a regimental mess. They linger on for some years longer, till at length, having attained by seniority the next step, which entitles them to 50*l.* per annum, their whole energies are directed towards retirement on the pension or invalid establishment, where, if they have been wounded, they continue to receive the same pay till they sink into the grave. It must be said, however, that they come originally from that class of society which is glad of a permanent livelihood, even on sixpence a day, or 9*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.* per annum, and that they end their career in comfortable retirement in old age with an annuity of thirty pounds,—usually without being able to sign their own name.

The European officers, we have said, go out as cadets, and should all be educated at the military seminary at Addiscombe, although the rule has fallen into desuetude from the great demand which has on various occasions existed for the infantry and cavalry services. The artillery and engineer corps, however, are in a different position, and the aspirants to these branches (un-

less when the calls of the service are unusually urgent) must keep their terms in the military college. The most distinguished for proficiency are selected for the engineers, the next for the artillery, and the remainder are posted to the infantry, but with some advantage over "direct cadets," or those whose education has not been superintended by the Company. Those selected for the engineers receive temporary commissions and proceed to Chatham where they finish their studies with officers of the same branch of the royal army; while the other cadets go out at once to India and receive appointments as vacancies occur. All rise by seniority, the engineers and artillery in their own several corps, and the cavalry and infantry in regiments, and after attaining the rank of field-officers they succeed to vacancies in each of their lines respectively.

This system, however, till a few years ago, was more impartial in theory than practice; for although not subjected to supercession, an officer might chance to grow grey without enjoying much promotion, and after twenty-two years' service he could only retire with the pay of the rank he held at the moment. But in 1836 a law was passed by which the veterans of the Company who have survived the casualties of war and time, are secured against the inequalities of fortune. Under this law, whatever their rank may be, after twenty-three years they retire with the pay of captain; after twenty-seven years with that of major; after thirty-one years with that of lieutenant-colonel; and after thirty-five years with that of colonel. When we add that they are also allowed the alternative of *selling* their commissions, the officers subscribing among themselves for the purpose, it will be admitted that, even without the chances of residences, military law appointments, and numerous other

contingencies, there is no service in the world which presents advantages equal to that of the Company.

There are various funds in the army which tend to alleviate the sufferings of the sick, the widow, and the orphan; but we shall allude only to one, and in so doing make use of the words of a distinguished officer. "The noblest institution in the Indian army," says General Briggs in an anonymous paper, "is the Military Fund, under the patronage of the Government, which contributes to it; but which is mainly supported by the private contributions of the officers themselves, all of whom are required by the rules of the service to subscribe to it according to their condition and rank. The advantages of the fund are confined entirely to aid sick officers proceeding to Europe, to the liberal support of widows during their widowhood, and to children, males till of age, and females till married. It is true that this institution has acted as a premium on marriage, and has been the means of inducing at least one-third of the officers of the Indian army to enter into that state; but it is worth while to advert to its effects on this portion of European society. The certainty of an annuity for life to the widow, and provision for children ensures to the Indian officer among the respectable classes of his country women, whether abroad or at home, a favourable reception of his addresses so far as pecuniary circumstances are concerned; and we say, without fear of contradiction, a more respectable body of females does not exist in the same class of society, than the wives of the officers of the Indian army. It is to this circumstance we owe chiefly the absence of those long and pernicious mess carousals, which we have ourselves witnessed in former times before the establishment of this fund. It is to this also we owe that delightful state of social intercourse which at present

exists in large military cantonments in India, and it is to the Military Fund we owe the rare occurrence of families of a mixed race, which in former times were so numerous, and which so materially tended to demoralize and degrade the English character in India."

The proportion of European officers to a sepoy infantry regiment is, a colonel and a lieutenant-colonel, one major, six captains, ten lieutenants, and five ensigns; but of these, deducting absentees from sickness, or on staff or civil employment, there are rarely more than from eight to twelve present on duty. That this extraordinary circumstance is attended with no real danger to the British dominion, is owing to the not less extraordinary fact that the prodigious army of India is a *volunteer* army. The service is eagerly sought after by the brave peasantry, who, once engaged in it, are provided for during life. They have rarely anything to fear from invidious supercession; they look forward to promotion in their turn, as fortune permits; their pay, in proportion to the station they originally held, is liberal to munificence; and, if unfit for active military duty, after fifteen years' service they may retire on a pension adequate to their comfortable support even without labour. But the sepoy returns to his original employment, to take his place at the head of the family; nor does the veteran find himself a stranger among his children, or his brothers and sisters, for he has visited them repeatedly on furlough, and during his whole period of service he has been in the habit of contributing two-thirds of his pay towards their support. He goes back to live in ease and dignity, to teach his children to love and venerate that mighty abstraction the Company, and to extend the influence of England still further throughout the ramifications of native society. Under such a system,

although temporary insubordination may and does sometimes occur in particular regiments, it is invariably caused by temporary grievances. General disaffection cannot exist—desertion is unknown. It is truly said that the power of Great Britain in the east rests upon her army, for that is, in still more important respects than military prowess, the foundation of her "empire of opinion."

The Company have been both wiser and more generous than Alexander the Great, whose Persian phalanx was officered, both superiors and subalterns, by Europeans. They removed the native commandant, whose ambition might probably have rendered his power dangerous; but they have retained a series of at least inferior officers, who are the connecting link between the men and their chiefs, and their families the connecting link between the people and the government. The following little picture by Colonel Sleeman affords an interesting explanation of the system, and shows the solid foundation upon which the power of the British stands. "Here I found an old native pensioner," says he, "above a hundred years of age. He had fought under Lord Clive at the battle of Plassey, A.D. 1757, and was still a very cheerful talkative old gentleman, though he had long lost the use of his eyes. One of his sons, a grey-headed old man, and a subadar (captain) in a regiment of native infantry, had been at the taking of Java, and was now come home on leave to visit his father. Other sons had risen to the rank of commissioned officers, and their families formed the aristocracy of the neighbourhood. In the evening, as the fleet approached, the old gentleman, dressed in the full uniform of former days as a commissioned officer, had himself taken out close to the bank of the river, that he might be once more during his life *within sight* of a British commander-in-chief, though he could no longer

see one. There the old patriarch sat listening with intense delight to the remarks of the host of his descendants around him, as the Governor-General's magnificent fleet passed along, every one fancying he had caught a glimpse of the great man, and trying to describe him to the old gentleman, who in return told them (no doubt for the thousandth time) what sort of a person the great Lord Clive was. His son, the old subadar, now and then, with modest deference, venturing to imagine a resemblance between one or the other and his *beau ideal* of a great man, Lord Lake. Few things in India have interested me more than scenes like these." In 1841, there were twenty-four thousand one hundred and eleven pensioners in the Bengal establishment out of an army of eighty-two thousand and twenty-seven men.

An Indian army is always attended by an extraordinary multitude of men, women, and children, termed camp followers. These are ten times more numerous than the troops themselves, so that when the whole employed force amounts to two hundred thousand men there are in the field at one moment, though in different parts of the country, two millions of human beings who derive their subsistence from the military expenditure alone of the Company. The march of even a small army thus includes an enormous assemblage, and its usually slow progress, not more than ten or twelve miles a day, keeps up a continuous excitement in the territory through which it passes.

The movement commences when it is yet night, and when the multitude are seen only in indefinite masses of shadow by the gleam of the stars. The hammering of tent-pins, the neigh of horses, the piteous cry of camels, the rattle here and there of a musket, the greetings of comrades, the Babel-tongues of the followers, all pro-

claim that the camp is astir; and at length, by the instinct of discipline, the men find their way in the dark to their places, and the long dusky line of the battalion is under arms. "Shoulder arms!—slope arms!—quick march!"—are the words of command, responded to by a thousand deep voices in their native tongues, with "Success to Mahadeo! Glory to the lord of Juggernauth!" and other cries, and the shadows are in motion. When the moving masses are touched here and there by the reddening light of the dawn, it is seen that the march is a true migration, with flocks and herds, cattle loaded with baggage, men, women, and children, all in a chaos of disorder but the troops whose wants and wishes have attracted this assemblage. At length the country appears to awake from its sleep, and with the yell of the jackal or the distant baying of the village dogs are heard to mingle the voices of human beings. Ruddier grows the dawn, warmer the breeze, and the light-hearted sepoy, no longer shivering with cold, gives vent to the joyous feelings of morning in songs and laughter. The scene becomes more striking, and the long array of tall camels, led by natives in picturesque costume, with here and there a taller elephant mingling with droves of loaded bullocks, give it a new and extraordinary character to a European imagination. The line of swarthy sepoys of upper India, with their moustached lips and tall handsome figures contrast favourably with the shorter and plainer soldiers of Britain; the grave mechanical movements of the regular cavalry in their light blue uniforms, are relieved by the erratic evolutions and gay and glittering dresses of the irregulars, who with loud cries and quivering spears, and their long black locks streaming behind them, spur backwards and forwards like the wind from mere exuberance of

spirits. The European officers on horseback, wrapped in furs or cloaks till the sun rises above the horizon, wile away the time by coursing the wild hog or other sport; and it may be that some such incident occurs to give excitement to the march as a herd of antelopes, terrified by the hunters, making a gallant dash at the array, breaking through the line of march, and, with the loss of a few of their forlorn hope, gaining the country on the other side. The camp followers in the meantime present every possible variety of costume; and among them, and not the least interesting figures in the various groups, may frequently be seen the pet-lambs of which the kindly sepoys are so fond, dressed in necklaces of ribbons and white shells, and the tip of their tails, ears, and feet dyed orange colour. The womankind of the troops of the Peninsula usually follow the drum; but the Bengallees have left their families at home, and the Europeans bidden adieu to their temporary wives with the air the band strikes up on quitting the station, "The girl I leave behind me." A military author observes, that no one who has not witnessed it can conceive the unique and picturesque appearance of an Indian army in progress, and that its masses of men and animals reminded him strongly of Danby's painting of the Passage of the Red Sea.

On nearing the new encampment the regiments are received each by its own fakir and gooroo, who, posting themselves in advance by the road-side, call the attention of their spiritual children by beating their tomtoms (a kind of small drum), and blessing with a loud voice Europeans, sepoys, and Company alike; in return for which they receive a shower of cowries and pice as the regiment passes. The fakir, who is usually an old man adorned with a long white beard, holds in his hand the

green standard of the prophet; and the gooroo, whose naked body is daubed with red and white ochre, displays a pennant emblazoned with a representation of the monkey-god. On their arrival they find the ground already marked out by the quarter-master and his establishment, and presently a city rises on the spot as if by magic. The general's durbar is in the centre of a wide street, formed of the dining-tents of the staff-officers on one side and their sleeping-tents on the other; and behind the main camp is a bazar, the mercantile quarter of the town, where everything necessary for the multitude is sold. The horses and other animals are piquetted in long lines in the open air; and on the outskirts of the encampment the elephants and camels browse or rest themselves after their march. When the site is hilly the piled arms of the outlying piquets on the heights during the day, and the lines of sentries at night, give a character of the picturesque to the military scene; and when the sun has disappeared the thousand little fires that gleam up all around, and the voices of song and laughter that rise from every hollow, add interest to the impression. Long before the next morning's march the fires are extinguished, and the voices cease; and the gong as it strikes the hour, the relief of guard, and sometimes the fitful howl of a pariah dog, are the only sounds that break the slumbers of the city of war.

The Mogul army, succeeded in India by the Company's force, was very differently constituted. In the time of Akbar the irregular troops commanded by district officers, and intended to act only in the provinces to which they belonged, amounted to four millions, while the regular army was composed of upwards of eight hundred thousand Mussulmans. The latter was divided into battalions of unequal numbers, two-thirds of which

were cavalry armed with long cutlasses. The infantry were furnished with bows and arrows, and a third of them with matchlocks. The strength of the battalions was proportioned to the rank of their commanders; and their pay, from a foot soldier to a general officer, varied according to service or caprice. This vast army in its day and generation kept Asia in awe; but the force we have just described would have scattered it like chaff before the wind.*

The Company's marine force, uniting the character of a mercantile and military navy, presents some features as worthy of attention as those of the land army. The origin of this fleet may be said to have been an armament of five ships and a pinnace, fitted out in 1600 under the royal charter, and commanded by Captain Lancaster, whose title to the distinction appears to have arisen from a voyage he had made to India before, not for the purposes of trade, but to cruise for booty against the Portuguese. On this new occasion he loaded his small vessels with the plunder of a large ship of that nation in the Straits of Malacca, and landed some agents at Bantam in the island of Java, the first factors of the Company. After this successful voyage various other expeditions of the same kind followed, the adventurers purchasing their ships in some of the Hanse-towns; but on the renewal of the charter in 1609 they were tempted, by the success that had attended their enterprises, to build a splendid vessel of their own of upwards of a thousand tons burthen, with an attendant pinnace of two hundred and fifty tons. The King, the Prince of Wales, and the chief nobility attended the launch; and it is told,

* In the preceding sheet, page 352, a typographical error makes the year when the troops were first organised into a regular battalion 1798. It should be 1748.

as a trait of the munificence of the times, that the dishes and plates of China ware (a great novelty in England) used at the entertainments on board were allowed to be taken away by the guests. In 1611, Captain Best, with a single ship and a small pinnace, engaged a Portuguese fleet of four galleons and twenty-six galleys, and gained so signal a victory that this enemy never afterwards attempted seriously to cope with the British in the Indian seas. The Dutch, however, proved a more formidable foe; and the greater part of the rest of the century was occupied with a bloody struggle which threatened to annihilate the commerce established by the Company's marine.

In the year 1621, the Company employed ten thousand tons of shipping, two thousand five hundred seamen, and five hundred ship carpenters, caulkers, joiners, &c.; and they expended considerable sums in charity to the widows and orphans of their sailors. In the course of the twenty-one preceding years, out of eighty-six vessels employed they had lost by shipwreck nine, by the Dutch eleven, and by wear and tear five. In 1624, a curious charge was brought against the Company in Parliament, that "they destroyed the timber of the country by building exceeding great ships," and another, that "by reason of their voyages there was a decay of mariners in England." If the answers made to these absurd charges do no other good they at least throw some incidental light upon the history of the trade. The price of timber, it seems, had not made any advance in consequence of the Company's demand; their ships required four months to get ready for sailing; they kept a magazine of stores suitable for naval war to the value of 30,000*l.*; and it was understood that their vessels in the event of any sudden necessity might be detained for the use of the state. Their mariners were

celebrated for their skill and experience; their ships carried out fewer men than those of the Dutch; but of their actual complement landsmen formed from a third to a half, and thus added to the number of seamen; while the naval strength of the kingdom was further increased by the tonnage, and men employed in exporting to other parts of Europe the surplus merchandise of India.

Under the Protectorate the Company's trade had declined so much that they gave up building ships for a time; and the consequence was, that, when they came to desire to recommence their operations, they required to set their own carpenters to work again, as they could purchase no vessels in the country of sufficient size or strength. About 1677, we find them employing from thirty to thirty-five ships of from three hundred to six hundred tons burthen, and carrying from forty to seventy guns each. If the number of guns be not a mistake, they must have been of very small size. It appears, however, that the whole of these ships were not, as heretofore, their own; for in a charter granted this year they are empowered to recover damages for breach of contract with shipowners. Their own vessels were now increased in size, as in seven years they had built sixteen of from nine hundred to thirteen hundred tons; but by 1707, they appear entirely to have given up owning ships, and to have confined themselves to carrying on their trade in chartered vessels.

In 1779, while the nation was engaged in the fatal war of that period, the Company presented three splendid seventy-fours to the Government, besides giving a large sum of money in bounties to seamen for the royal navy; and in 1803, ten thousand tons of their chartered ships were employed for six months, at their own expense, in

guarding the British coasts against an invasion threatened by the French, and in other public services. These vessels were in all probability quite as efficient as ships of the royal navy; for in the following year sixteen of the Company's argosies, returning heavily laden from China, encountered and put to flight a French admiral, with an eighty-gun ship, two large frigates, a corvette of thirty guns, and a brig of eighteen guns. In 1810 the Company's chartered ships were worth above 4,000,000*l.* sterling, and carried upwards of one hundred thousand tons; and at this period their acknowledged superiority was so great that the premium of insurance on their cargo was only seven per centum, while that on ship or ships generally was fifteen.

The peculiarity of the Company's marine departed with their mercantile character; but still they have a steam navy of considerable power, chiefly used in times of peace for carrying despatches; and a pilot establishment, which is a regularly constituted service. Naval cadets (who are nominated by the President of the Board of Control and the Directors) must not be under fifteen nor above nineteen years of age; and after serving twenty-two years (or sooner on a medical certificate), they may retire on a respectable pension.

The Indian navy, including war and packet service, consists at present of seven armed steamers of from two hundred and ten to three hundred and fifty horse power, and mounting from three to six guns; four unarmed steamers of from one hundred and sixty to three hundred horse power; a small ten horse power steamer; nine iron steamers of from forty to seventy horse power, sent from England in pieces and put together abroad; three eighteen-gun sloops; two ten-gun brigs, one of eight guns, and one unarmed; two schooners; two cutters, carrying

two guns each; a receiving ship; two pattamars and a coal ship, at Aden. Two packet steamers and one war steamer are building, each of five hundred horse power and one thousand four hundred and forty tons burthen. The pilot service has eighteen vessels, with four iron tug steam-boats of sixty horse power each, and four iron accommodation boats. On the Bengal establishment are kept eleven steamers, four of them iron, of from thirty-two to two hundred and twenty horse power, capable of being employed in war, in which some of them did brilliant service in the Chinese rivers.

CHAPTER III.

LAW AND POLICE.

When the Company first began to take up their position as one of the ruling powers of Hindostan, they were involved in extraordinary difficulties, partly from the confusion which prevailed during the dismemberment of the Empire, and partly from the comparative ignorance of their functionaries on all matters connected with the habits and customs of the people it had become their duty to govern. We have already had occasion to glance at the systems of law among the Hindoos and Mahomedans; but in the last years of the Mogul dominion, when the English entered upon the scene, there could not be said to be any system at all. In theory India was subject to the law of the Koran as explained by the different sects, but in practice the Hindoos were allowed to arrange their own differences in civil cases without the intervention of their masters at all. In criminal matters, however, the Mahomedan courts alone decided, and also in litigations concerning

property in which one of the parties professed the faith of the conquerors. But the extent to which the new law was introduced depended in a great measure upon the circumstances of the particular territory. In those principalities that were allowed to remain under the government of their ancient chiefs, only such portions of the Mahomedan jurisprudence was introduced as were necessary to render uniform throughout the country the collection of the revenue; and latterly, when the chiefs had thrown off the yoke of the supreme power, there could hardly be said to be any law but the will of the strongest.

It must be recollected that the Company did not literally conquer India by the battle of Plassey, but merely became, by its results, one of the great officers of the Mogul—Dewan of Bengal—and were thus placed in circumstances to engage in the struggle for power with the other princes of the distracted country. There could be no question at first, therefore, of introducing, however partially, a new body of laws; their duty was to administer the laws they found in operation; and it was not till long after that they began to remodel the forms of justice after something like a European fashion.

In the seats of their own trade, as we have seen, they had early been invested with the powers of civil, criminal, and martial law; but these were applicable only to Europeans and their immediate dependents among the natives; and when at length they strove to bring, at least partially, under such jurisdiction the provinces they had acquired, it was admitted to be an exercise not of right but of power, similar, except in its motives and effects, to the tyrannous interference of the native princes. In 1772, courts of law were instituted in the different provinces, and the revenue collectors there entrusted with their superintendence; while head courts of appeal,

the Dewanny Sudder Adawlut for civil cases, and the Nizamut Adawlut for criminal cases, revised the proceedings of the rest. These courts were themselves in turn controlled at first by the Collector-General and Revenue Board; but were afterwards placed at Calcutta, subject to the revision of the President and Council. In 1775, the Nizamut Adawlut was transferred to Moorshedabad (the capital of Bengal from 1704 till 1757, when that rank was virtually taken by Calcutta), and placed under the superintendence of the deputy Nazim, by whom officers of police were appointed in the various districts. This kind of police establishment was abolished in 1781, and civil judges, the Company's covenanted servants, were empowered to apprehend criminals. and send them for trial to the nearest court. The sentences of these courts were submitted in monthly returns to a separate department of the government at Calcutta; and the control of the criminal jurisdiction was ultimately vested in the Governor General, assisted by a remembrancer.

But this system did not work well in practice, for the authority of the few and scattered English magistrates was easily evaded by the great landholders; and it was found that persons accused of petty crimes, sent by the former to the provincial criminal courts, lay there sometimes for years before trial. In 1787, therefore, the magistrates were empowered to decide summarily in petty cases, and to impose fines and inflict corporal punishment; and they were at the same time made collectors of the revenue in their respective districts. But even this had little effect, and the whole system was again remodelled.

The Nizamut Adawlut was once more removed from Moorshedabad to Calcutta, and composed of the Governor-General and members of the Supreme Council,

assisted by the head cazi, or Mahomedan judge, and two muftis, or expounders of the law. To these native officers it was left to declare the law as applicable to the cases before the court; while the executive business was entrusted to a register. The proceedings of the inferior courts were submitted to this tribunal, drawn up in Persian, and a copy of its final sentence was returned, with a signed warrant directing the manner in which it was to be carried into effect.

Courts of circuit were established for the trial of criminal cases, to be held twice a year, at Calcutta, Moorshedabad, and Dacca (the ancient capital of Bengal), and at Patna, the capital of Bahar. Each of these was superintended by two covenanted servants of the Company, assisted by a cazi, a mufti, and a register. Sentence was passed and carried into effect according to the law as explained by the native officers, except in cases where the punishment was death or perpetual imprisonment; and in these the judges had power to remit the cause to the Nizamut Adawlut. Before this time a curious distinction had been made in trials for murder, in which the guilt was frequently determined by the manner of the deed or the nature of the weapon; but the more rational doctrine of Yuzef and Mahomed, making the intention the criterion, was now laid down as the general rule. The relations of the victim were debarred from the right they had previously exercised of pardoning the offender; and in various regulations respecting the duties of judges a considerable step appears to have been taken in assimilating the mode of justice to European ideas.

Courts of magistracy were likewise formed, the collectors being appointed magistrates, within jurisdictions extending over all places within the limits of the district. Their business and authority were similar in some

respects to those of English police magistrates; but they were empowered to order corporal punishment to the extent of fifteen rattans, as well as imprisonment for the same number of days, and a fine of at most two hundred rupees, not only on the offender if found guilty, but on the accuser if the charge proved to be groundless. In the case of a European-British or a European-French subject becoming amenable to justice, it was this magistrate's duty to send him for trial to the Supreme Court, and to take measures to secure the attendance of witnesses. All other Europeans were tried in the Court of Circuit, like the natives of the country.

In 1793 this system was remodelled by Lord Cornwallis. By it the collectors of revenue had been constituted magistrates and judges, and thus were called on to determine upon suits originating in their own department—a fertile source of litigation in India. The civil servants of the Company, it is true, were men of unquestionable honour; but in the government of a country nothing must be left to individual character, and it was now considered necessary to separate entirely the revenue from the judicial department. District and city Courts of Adawlut were instituted, each presided over by a covenanted servant of higher rank than the collectors, and who became judge, magistrate, and superintendent of police, in one. The register of the courts, assisted by junior civil servants, was empowered to try petty suits, but with appeal to the judge, who might order a new trial. In the composition of the court there were likewise Mahomedan and Hindoo officers to expound the Koran and the Shasters, and native pleaders to conduct the proceedings of suitors under established regulations. These pleaders received a retaining fee, and in civil cases a per-centage on the sum at issue. In order to meet

cases where the parties resided at a distance, and when perhaps the amount was too small to bear the expense of carrying the suit to the zillah (district) court, local native commissioners were authorized to hear and determine questions of personal property under a certain amount. These commissioners were allowed no salary, but a small per-centage instead on all the causes they settled; and if parties were dissatisfied with their decisions they had still the right of appeal to the city or district court. In all civil questions of property between natives, the law to be administered was either Hindoo or Mahomedan, according to the religion of the defendant; but in some parts of the country—for instance, Malabar and Canara—where the local custom was different from both, that was followed as if it had been an established law.

Above the city and district courts were the provincial courts of appeal and circuit, empowered either to receive further evidence or refer the case back to that in which they originated. A further appeal might be made to the Supreme Court; and from that a final petition to the King in Council, during which execution was suspended, security being taken from both parties for the safety of the property and the payment of costs.

The judges of the city and district courts were likewise magistrates, as we have observed, and their duty was "to apprehend murderers, robbers, thieves, housebreakers, and all persons charged with crimes and misdemeanors." They were empowered either to release the prisoner, admit him to bail, administer punishment within certain limits, or commit him for trial before the Court of Circuit. From this, as formerly, there was an appeal to the Nizamut Adawlut. In criminal cases the law continued nominally the same as under the Mogul dynasty; but by 13th Geo. III., ch. 63, full licence was given for

any modifications that might be considered necessary. The Koran, in fact, is very meagre as a body of laws, and were it not for the various commentaries, not only on the text but on tradition, the followers of the Prophet, whose social condition is much changed since he led them forth from the deserts of Arabia, would have no guide in many of the ordinary occurrences of life. In Mahomedan countries, when a cazi finds no text applicable to the question he has to determine, he very gravely puts the sacred volume upon his head and delivers a decision of his own. The sentence of the Nizamut Adawlut was final, only reserving a power of remission or mitigation of punishment to the Governor-General.

During the administration of Lord William Bentinck, the next great changes were introduced. The provincial courts of appeal were found not to work well—in the civil department, we presume, because they had no judicial reputation, but had become, in the words of the Governor-General, "a resting-place for those members of the service who were deemed unfit for higher responsibilities;" and in the criminal department, because their bi-annual circuit was a virtual condemnation of the accused to six months' imprisonment before trial. The accused, however, did not suffer alone, for the prosecutor and witnesses were detained, sometimes for months, awaiting the tardy sessions; and thus the strongest motives were given for the concealment of crime, even to those who suffered by it. Lord William swept away a court which, at the best, was but an encumbrance on the judicial system; although, unhappily, he either was, or imagined himself to be compelled, for the sake of economy, to restore the union which subsisted before the reforms of Lord Cornwallis between the revenue and judicial departments. He began by appointing

commissioners of revenue and circuit, who were to hold a jail delivery four times instead of twice in the year; but afterwards transferred the charge of the session to the judge of the district, directing him to hold a jail delivery every month.

This was perhaps the most important step the British ever took in the administration of justice in India—and it has been followed since by many other amendments which it is unnecessary to specify here,—but although the business of this court was transferred from the revenue commissioners to the judge of the district for the express reason that it was incompatible with the fiscal duties of the former, Lord William restored the union of the office of magistrate with that of collector.

The functions of a magistrate are of far more importance to the masses of a country than those of a judge. For one person who comes into a court of law, fifty are brought into contact with the police authorities; and in India, more especially, from the enormous disproportion which exists between the number of such courts and that of the population, the people are almost wholly at the mercy of the police.

"The county of Surrey," says Mr. Mangles in an anonymous paper, "would make but a small Indian district. Imagine only one magistrate to such a tract of country, residing at Guildford,—for the stations are by no means universally centrical. In some instances, indeed, the magistrate's court is fixed upon the very border of his jurisdiction, some parts of which are from sixty to eighty miles distant. Imagine all parties charged with offences, and the witnesses, brought on foot from Rotherhithe or Croydon to Guildford, and detained there some days during the disposal of prior or more pressing cases, or whilst the magistrate—who is often

also the collector—is obliged to attend to some one of his other important and multifarious duties. Imagine, then, that if the case be important, the magistrate commits the suspected parties for trial by the session judge, who cannot be expected, under the most favourable circumstances, to hold the trial in less than a fortnight or three weeks. The party injured and the witnesses have the happy alternative of walking thirty or forty miles to their homes, and the same distance back again to the judge's court, or of remaining at the civil station, neglecting their business and families during the whole period above stated. Can it be wondered, that if this were all, the people should prefer to submit to many injuries from each other, to all losses not extreme, to all wrongs not intolerable, rather than seek redress at such a cost of fatigue, waste of time, and vexation?"

The magistrate and his assistant are civil servants of the Company; but, however anxious to do their duty, they are beset by a class of native officers in whom it is impossible to confide. In the army the distance between the British officers and the men is broken by the native officers, who are entitled to be considered as gentlemen, and who exercise very jealously the privilege of sitting down in the presence of their European comrades. Without them the Europeans could have done little with troops of whose language, manners, and habits they were ignorant; but notwithstanding this obvious analogy, in the police, a part of the service of equal though different importance, the magistrate has up to this year stood lofty and alone, with no native near him of higher rank than the thanadar, with a salary of 30*l.* a year. Of these officers, in Bengal, there are from twelve to sixteen in each establishment, presiding over the different divisions of the district. Under them are four or five

jemadars with 9*l.* 12*s.* a year, stationed at different points of the thanadar's jurisdiction; while thirty or forty burkundazes, with 4*l.* 16*s.* a year, surround his person at head quarters.

The distance in rank between the magistrate and these officers is so great as to render their connection in some instances only nominal. The thanadar is the true police governor of the country, and he and his satellites hang together and make common cause against the European chief. They exact regular fees from the villages never contemplated by the law; get up imaginary crimes for their own profit, and in the case of real ones make the accused, the accusers, and the witnesses pay alike. It is so much in their power, as well as inclination, to harass all that come in contact with them, that in many instances people who have been robbed carefully conceal the fact, lest it should bring upon them the assistance of the police. The working of the system is described in an anecdote related by Colonel Sleeman, of the visit of the police in a case of supposed murder.

An idle boy, it appears, on receiving a slight blow, cried out that his master had killed him, whereupon his father, who was within hearing, ran to the watchman of the village to complain of the fact. The watchman, no doubt a good friend of the thanadar, went off at once to that dignitary, who resided some miles distant to call his attention to a case of murder; and the thanadar sent his jemadar with a detachment of subordinate police to prepare all things for an inquest on the body. The jemadar on arriving dismounted at the murderer's door, and commanded all the shopkeepers of the village to be seized and bound hand and foot as accomplices. Even the watchman now began to have some qualms, and entreated the jemadar to go first and see the body of the

boy before taking any further steps; but that active officer and his suite had ridden some miles, and it was unreasonable to expect them to proceed to such duty without eating. A feast was accordingly prepared, including nine rupees worth of sweetmeats at the expense of the shopkeepers; and one of them, on the arrival of "his highness" the thanadar, was unbound to *receive* him. This was done in due form by his presenting the great man with fifteen rupees collected among the villagers; and the thanadar thus mollified, condescended to dismount and partake of the feast. After the appetite of the whole cortege was satisfied, the murder came out; the boy's father was smartly fined for making a false report; the master was smartly fined for the beating which had caused such alarm in the community; the shopkeepers were set at liberty without further punishment; and the thanadar after smoking his pipe, remounted his horse, and, followed by his retinue, rode gravely home.

This may be esteemed the ludicrous aspect of the system; but the impropriety of entrusting what is practically irresponsible power to the lower class of natives is evidenced by much more serious details. The following occurrence we give in the words of an Ango-Indian newspaper of the present year.

"One of the cases here entered is that dreadful case of torture by Bholanath Gungolee Darogah and others, the police officers of Thanna Mirzapore, to extort a confession from one Rundoolal Roy of a dacoity which had never been committed, in which, from the consequences of the horrid treatment which he received, and the subsequent detention at the thanna to evade detection, the toes and fingers of the poor victim rotted off, and he is left a cripple and a pensioner on the bounty of the Go-

vernment for life. The fingers and toes of the man were first tied together, and, wedges being driven between them to the greatest extent of tension, he was laid out on his back in the sun. This not producing the desired effect, his hands and feet were dipped into boiling water; then the ligatures were unloosened, and bandages dipped in oil, tied round the fingers of both hands and the toes of the left foot, and *lighted;* and this not forcing him to confess, he was, as if to prevent any hope of his recovery, detained several days at the thanna without any remedies being applied; and when brought in by orders of the magistrate, to whose knowledge the case had been brought, his hands and feet were in a state of mortification, and ultimately his fingers and toes rotted off. This is perhaps an extreme case of torture, and I am happy to say, that all the police officers, though not the others concerned, have been severely punished; but acts of torture by Bansdollah and other brutal and indecent means are of too frequent occurrence by the police; and what can be said of that system of total want of check and control which could admit of a darogah, with other police officers, adopting such measures, towards a party falsely charged to his knowledge of being engaged in a decoity, with any hope of non-detection and escape?"

The mere distance of the magistrate, however, gives rise of itself to enormous oppression. We are told by an Indian judge, who writes in 1837, that the things and persons connected with a crime — such as stolen property, infirm or wounded witnesses, and dead bodies —all are sent before the magistrate, perhaps a hundred miles distant, by carts, porters, or bearers seized for the occasion and pressed into the public service. These carriers are relieved at each stage, and the consequence is, that on seeing the cortege approach a village,

the inhabitants take to flight, and it occasionally happens that even old women, too infirm to run, are laid hold of for the duty. Should the police escort loiter behind, these compulsory bearers lay down their burthen and decamp; and the passing traveller may be regaled with the spectacle of a wounded man, or a dead body lying by the roadside, with troops of crows and vultures hovering above and around. Time is then lost in scouring the country for more old women, and thus, when the corpse, after a journey of several days, at length reaches its destination, it is "sent to the civil surgeon in such a state of putrefaction that no one feature or cause of death is discernible."

It is a fact stated by Indian magistrates, that the native functionaries of police connive at the existence of bands of dacoits within their districts, on the understanding that they rob elsewhere, and give their protectors a fair share of the spoil. This is precisely the system, but on a mean and inglorious scale, which we have described as prevailing under the ancient Hindoo government, and regulated by the code of laws translated by Halhed. Without some such explanation, it would be impossible to understand how the practice of thuggee existed for so long a period, and was uprooted with so much difficulty; but in point of fact each police district protects its own criminals of all kinds, and is only at war with those of other districts. Dacoity has thus grown into a regular profession, venerable for its antiquity, and when successfully practised creditable rather than otherwise to its followers. The dacoits are well known in their villages, and live at peace with their neighbours, joining in religious observances with as much piety as the rest. They prepare for their expeditions with prayer, soliciting a favourable omen from God and Kali. "If it be thy will," say they, "O God, and thine, Kali, to prosper our

undertaking for the sake of the blind and lame, the widow and the orphan, that depend upon our exertions, vouchsafe, we pray, the call of the female jackal on the right." They then sit down and smoke their pipes, waiting for the reply of the Deity; and if it be favourable, they return thanks, and if unfavourable they retire in silence, and try the omen another day. Before setting forth they settle the rates at which the booty is to be shared among them, men women and children having their respective quotas allotted to them; and the widow and orphans of any man who is killed, or who dies during the expedition, either receiving a large donation, or else continuing to enjoy their shares as long as the widow remains unmarried. They then immolate a certain number of goats, and swear fidelity to each other, after dipping their fingers into the blood of the sacrifice, finishing the ceremony by feasting on the flesh, and drinking abundance of spirits.

We have seen how solicitous the Company have always been to purify and strengthen the judicial system, and in like manner they have at various times, but with much less success, devoted their attention to the police. The subject was one of great difficulty from the immense tract of country to be brought under regulation, and from the habits of extortion and oppression engendered by former tyrants; and the difficulty was not a little increased by their unwillingness to look for co-operation beyond the expensive circle of their own covenanted service. They are now, however, proceeding upon the true principle. They make the post of thanadar of more respectability, by attaching to it a much larger salary, and they connect that officer with the magistrate by means of an uncovenanted deputy. The next step will be to raise the jemadar, who in his own subdivision

is a sort of petty police magistrate, from the excessive temptation to which his poverty at present subjects him. As for the lower officers, to whom no power is intrusted, they must remain, we presume, in the position of the policemen at home, and receive pay suitable to their condition in life, and the custom of the country.

Under native governments, the police administration was connected more intimately than at present with the village system. Lands were set apart in every village in proportion to the size of its territory, for the payment of the watchmen, who had thus a powerful interest in the protection of the community. If the upper part of the system, connecting the village with the general government, had been as perfect, India would probably have been one of the best regulated countries in the world. But under native rule, through the corruption of superior officers, and under British, through the imperfect appreciation of the real importance of the village system, this admirable foundation has been turned to small account. So little attention is now paid to the preservation of the watchmen's lands, that many, stripped of any inducement to labour, have attempted to throw up their employment; and it is stated by the Hon. F. J. Shore, that these hereditary and unpaid guardians were frequently flogged (before the abolition of this mode of punishment a few years ago) because a theft had been committed in their village. It must not be supposed however, that the spoliation of those police lands is perpetrated in a direct manner by the British, who, on the contrary, have the strongest interest in preserving the peace of the country, and who spend large sums in attempting to do so. It takes place indirectly, through the revenue system, to which we shall presently allude, imposing in many parts of the country a heavier

tax upon the farmers or landholders than they find it easy to pay, and thus tempting them to take into their own hands the fields which, by immemorial custom, were allotted to the watchmen of the village. The revenue is of course the chief object of the Company, because on it their very existence as a government depends; but it may be doubted whether they have not in some instances been too solicitous to secure the necessary amount, to admit of their adopting the surest and most advantageous mode of doing so.

Besides the courts we have mentioned, presided over by European judges, there are three other courts, all of which are more or less open to the charge of corruption. The lowest judge is the moonsiff, who decides on suits in which Europeans are not parties, and where the amount of litigation does not exceed three hundred rupees. The next is the sudder ameen, who is generally a native, and who adjudicates in original suits not exceeding one thousand rupees. The third court is that of the principal sudder ameen, who determines for unlimited amounts, and in appeal cases from the sudder ameen referred from the district judges.

In the Madras Presidency, the administration of civil justice is by village moonsiffs, who decide suits, without appeal, not exceeding ten rupees, and district moonsiffs who are limited to one thousand rupees. Suits for any amount between one thousand and five thousand rupees, must be brought before the Zillah (European) Court, which may refer them for trial to sudder ameens (natives), if not exceeding two thousand five hundred rupees; to registers (Europeans), if not exceeding three thousand; and to principal sudder ameens, auxiliary or assistant judges, or the zillah judges themselves, as far as five thousand rupees. Provincial courts try suits for any

amount exceeding five thousand rupees. An appeal to a higher tribunal may be made from every decree, excepting those passed by the village moonsiffs. Panchaets are vested with unlimited jurisdiction, but in this presidency are scarcely at all resorted to.

In Bombay there is frequent recourse to the panchaet, an old Hindoo custom, only adapted, one would think, for a simple and primitive people, but which remained untouched by the Mahomedan, and is still in full force under the British Government. When the suit in question is involved, from the defendant admitting and denying part, the magistrate usually advises a panchaet; which is formed by the two parties selecting each two friends as referees, while either these or the magistrate appoints a fifth as president. A warrant is then drawn up constituting this committee a court, and the plaintiff and defendant give in sealed papers agreeing to abide by its decision. A trifling sum is allowed to the members of the panchaet for their attendance and loss of time; but this, it is said, is rarely accepted, the office being usually undertaken from friendly motives.

With English law for the Europeans, Hindoo law for the Hindoos, Mahomedan law for the Mahomedans, the substantive law of their country or the country of their ancestors for strangers, and local custom for different provinces in India, there has as yet been no such thing as a *lex loci—the* law of the country, to which persons not specially exempted should be amenable. This, however, it is probable, will now be forthwith supplied by the institution of English law under certain restrictions for all who do not profess the Hindoo or Mahomedan faith.

The punishments in India are pretty nearly the same as in England, including fine, imprisonment, compulsory

labour, transportation, and death. Whipping was for some time abolished, but has recently been had recourse to again. Imprisonment, however, is the grand corrective of crime, for the natives are too poor, and some say too avaricious, to pay for their misdeeds in money; and the administration of the jails has accordingly received of late years much attention and many improvements. From the Report made by the Committee on Prison Discipline to Lord Auckland in 1838, it appears that in India, as elsewhere, a want of proper classification of the prisoners was the principal evil. In Malacca they had not even the means of separating the women from the men; and even at Calcutta the female prisoners are stated not to have been "properly secluded." Male prisoners throughout India usually worked in chains upon the roads, guarded by armed men, of whom one was allowed for every five convicts; and it was a common circumstance for the labourers to attempt to escape, when great loss of life was the consequence on both sides. Persons confined for milder offences were employed within the jails at various trades, and in some places there was a tread mill. In Bengal the prisoners were supported by a money allowance, and in Madras and Bombay by rations; but almost everywhere they were allowed to purchase such luxuries as they could afford, and in general, by means of bribery, or when proceeding to road-work, they were able to obtain even spirits and intoxicating drugs. Convicts were transported from all parts of India to Singapore, Pinang, and Malacca; but from Bengal also to the Tenasserim Provinces, and from Bombay also to Mauritius. Europeans were transported to Van Diemen's Land and New South Wales. The following is an abstract of the more important of the statistical parts of the report.

DISTRICT.	GAOLS.			PRISONERS.				Entire Number of Criminal Prisoners belonging to District, whether in Gaol or on the Road.	Population of the District.	Square Miles in the District.	Proportion per 10,000 Prisoners to the Population.
				CIVIL.		CRIMINAL.					
	Number of Civil.	Number of Criminal.	Number of those that are both Civil and Criminal.	Calculated to hold.	Confined in Gaol.	Calculated to hold.	Confined in Gaol.				
Bengal	13	15	39	2,434	1,171	29,880	17,164	23,622	38,308,704	187,824	6·93
North-West Provinces....	14	29	15	2,738	675	19,287	10,235	18,355	33,499,217	99,410	5·48
Madras	10	21	8	735	128	10,399	9,760	9,760	14,523,178	144,600	6·72
Bombay................	6	10	6	555	303	6,051	4,354	4,895	5,124,343	58,084¼	9·55
Grand Total......	43	75	68	6,462	2,277	65,617	41,513	56,632	91,455,442	489,918¼	619

It has been customary to stigmatize the Indian people with the character of litigiousness, from the great overflow of business in the courts established by the British; but the simple fact is, that the native courts then abolished were numerous, and their authority was concentrated in a new system very inadequate as regards extent, and so ill administered as to draw from the Court of Directors the remark, that "it would be better to have left the people to decide their causes themselves, by any arbitrary methods they chose, than to harass their feelings and ruin their property, by establishing courts where justice is sought for in vain." Above the village watchmen, the authorities, though corrupt and tyrannical, were sufficiently numerous for the complete administration of the law; and when their courts were one and all shut up, it is no wonder that those of the British should have been crowded. But the institution of the panchaet is sufficient of itself to disprove the charge of litigiousness, at least as regards the Hindoos.

It now only remains for us to advert, in a few words, to the comparatively rapid improvement which has taken place in the judicial system, and the absolute stagnation of the police system, and to the causes which have produced these opposite effects in both. In the former many of the difficulties laboured under by the British have yielded to the mere influence of time and contact. They were at first called upon to administer laws, which they did not themselves comprehend, to a people of whose idiosyncrasies they were utterly ignorant; they knew not the idiom of the witnesses, or their habits of thought and action which alone can determine the weight of expressions; they were separated by a conventional gulf from their native judicial coadjutors; and they had not a single idea in common with the native pleader who argued be-

fore them on the causes it was their business to decide. They had no educated bar. The judges were certain servants of the Company, who chose to administer the laws, just as others chose to collect the revenue, and others to apply themselves to the discharge of political or commercial functions as the several means which appeared best adapted for the attainment of fortune. But all this regulated itself by degrees. The Company at first worked blindly, like the individuals they employed, but by dint of perseverance and honourable intention, came gradually into the proper path. The mist at least partially dissolved. The country and its people became better known, and the experience of one generation was added to the legal knowledge of the next. But above all things the distance diminished between the Europeans and the natives. The salaries of the latter were augmented under the excellent administration of Lord William Bentinck, and more recently this indispensable step towards filling confidential employments from the respectable classes of native society has been proceeded in with more confidence. The unimpeachable character of the British judges has thus become an object of imitation, not of distant wonder; and it may be expected that a similar improvement will gradually take place in all the other parts of the system.

In the police, on the other hand, experience was of no avail, because the already existing foundation of such an executive in the village system was not sufficiently well appreciated; because the European magistrates were too few to turn their acquired knowledge to account for the general advantage of the country; because there was little or no practical connection between them and the subordinate agents they had to work with; and because the latter, in whose hands rested the real power, so far

as the mass of the people were concerned, were necessarily composed, on account of the miserable pittance they received in the shape of salary, either of the lowest class of natives or of those who resorted to the employment for the facilities it afforded of dishonest gains. It has been seen, however, that the true remedy is now, at least to a certain extent, in operation; and however slow the looker-on of the day may consider the march of improvement, if we recollect the very brief period that has elapsed since the consolidation of the British power in India, we shall be justified in entertaining brilliant hopes of the future.

CHAPTER IV.

REVENUE—COMMERCE.

When the Company first established themselves in India, it was in the character of peaceful merchants seeking profit from trade; and the earliest revenues they possessed otherwise were the rents paid by the little districts round their factories on the coast, and the customs levied at these ports, imposts which were assessed according to the usages of the country or the terms of the grants they had obtained from the Mogul or his chiefs. When the force of circumstances, however, had made them sovereigns, it was necessary to look to other sources for funds to meet the inevitable expenses of government. There was no difficulty in this. They found a regular revenue just as they found a kingdom, and they took the one with the other; and it was not till after the lapse of some time that they discovered themselves to be in a false position and began to remodel both.

The revenue was always a vexatious affair, from that

early time when their troops were mutinying for want of pay up to the present moment when they are many millions in debt. The revenue accordingly has been so fertile a subject of controversy, and has received such an infinity of explanations, that it is now very difficult to understand it. The Company, to do them justice, never affected to comprehend at once so involved a question. They were anxious to get out of their false position, and made many efforts to do so. They tried first one plan, then another, then several at a time in different parts of the country; and even in the present day it is not yet decided in their councils which species of settlement is the most advantageous for the people and themselves.

Perhaps more than enough has been said about the ancestral rights of the people of India, considering the small vestiges of them that appear in history. The Hindoos appear to have been originally not so much conquerors as settlers in a thinly peopled and savage country; and their lawgiver Menu declared distinctly that "the cultivated land was the property of him who first cleared and tilled it." But this sentence, if taken alone, does not yield the inference drawn from it, that the land belonged to the individual cultivators; for these new settlers, before forming an extensive plan either of war or immigration, must have been subdivided under their chiefs or heads of families, and the territory would be parcelled out accordingly. Whatever may have been the original land settlement, however, it is sufficiently obvious that at some early period the people, throughout nearly the entire country, were congregated in self-governed townships, and that the connection of these with the state bore greater reference to the revenue than to any other part of the political system. But these townships were far from being entirely republican, as it has been the prac-

tice to represent them; neither did they exhibit a picture of that primitive simplicity which the name of "villages" given to the collective abodes of the inhabitants conjures up before an European imagination. They were each governed by a chief whose office was hereditary, who acted on a commission from the sovereign, and who, there is some reason to suspect, may have conspired occasionally with the district officers, or other links connecting the community with the government, to oppress the people for their own advantage. The amount of tax prescribed in the sacred books as the proper revenue of a just monarch, was from one-tenth to one-sixth part of the produce of the lands; but it is hardly probable that this limit could have been practically followed in ancient any more than in modern times. Had such been the case, Mahmoud of Ghizni would have found the wealth of the country better distributed—he would not have found the mass of the people as poor as they are to day, and enormous treasures heaped up in palaces and temples. But even if the sovereign governed according to law, his subjects could not have been much better off for the forbearance. The petty tyrant of the village fields was tyrannised over by a higher officer; and he by a higher, and a higher, till "despotism," in the words of a modern author, "was established as it were in detail, in every corner of the land."

But whatever may have been the rule among the Hindoos, this was entirely changed, at least in theory, by our predecessors the Mahomedans, who declared, on the principles of the Koran, that they had a right, as conquerors, not only to the entire property of the land, but to the lives of its infidel possessors. The latter they took from time to time without ceremony; but at length

established it as a general rule, that the survivors should be spared on condition of their paying a tax of one-half the produce of their lands. "The taking of a half," says the Hedaya, "is no more than strict justice, and is not tyrannical, because, as it is lawful to take the *whole* of the persons and property of infidels, and to distribute those among the Mussulmen, it follows that taking *half* their incomes is lawful *a fortiori*." A great Mahomedan lawyer requires that after the tax is taken, there should be enough left to the cultivator to serve as seed for the next crop! In addition to this, in order to bring the whole people into the circle of taxation, the Hindoos paid a capitation tax, amounting to 1*l.* 18*s.* a year on the wealthy class, 19*s.* on the less wealthy, and 9*s.* 6*d.* on the lower class; five per centum as transit duties on merchandise; and two and a half per centum on bullion, ornaments, plate, merchandise not in transit, stock in trade, &c. These, together with the imposts on the Mahomedan part of the population, formed the jumma, to be remitted to the imperial exchequer; but under a government so loosely constructed as to depend entirely upon the individual character of the sovereign, it is not surprising that the ravenous appetite of the officers of the revenue should have been dissatisfied with the expenses of collection, which they were permitted to take from the assessed, and have had recourse also to a host of other imposts depending entirely upon the power of the oppressor and the means of the victim. When the farmers of the revenue (zemindars) were supposed to collect more from the ryots than they accounted for, new cesses were made on them, which were of course met by new exactions on the people; till at length, in the last days of the empire, all—zemindars and ryots alike—were involved in one common ruin.

This was the state of things when Bengal fell into the

hands of the Company in 1765, and their inexperience made it, if possible, worse. Under the former Government the taxes, oppressive as they were, were understood; but the new collectors, ignorant of the principles which governed the imposts, and lost in admiration of the splendour of the revenue they had acquired, thought only of realizing it. The crisis now came, which would have come at any rate. The sources of revenue, impoverished by ages of misrule, appeared to dry up, for agriculture was almost at a stand still, and the arts, harassed by vexatious exactions, and deprived of a market by the decline both of the imperial and provincial courts, lost their energy. But the English did not understand the signs of the times. They quarrelled with, and turned off one by one, their nabobs, for the revenue must be kept up; and the money so extorted from the people they sent out of the country in Chinese investments, thus completing the destruction of internal trade and industry.

In 1769 they appointed supervisors to superintend the native officers, and inquire into the condition of the people, and learned what was known already, that the governors plundered the zemindars and greater farmers of the revenue, and the latter the ryots. In 1772, Mr. Hastings took the management of the provinces into his own hands, converted the supervisors into collectors, and let the lands on security for five years to the highest bidders. This did not answer, for the zemindars had bid too eagerly, and so many became defaulters that, in 1774, native collectors were substituted for the Company's servants in the provinces. At the expiration of the five years the lands were again let to farmers under new superintendence; and this state of confusion, in which the British continued the exactions and the oppressions

of the Moguls, went on, in the midst of vain reprimands from the Directors, and still vainer directions to the Company from Parliament, till 1789.

This was the epoch of the zemindary settlement of Lord Cornwallis, pronounced in 1793 to be permanent; the Directors declaring in a famous despatch which conveyed their assent, that the government had been occupied for nearly thirty years "in a degrading struggle perpetually subsisting throughout the country for taxes and rents." The not very mystical fact had been discovered, that a revenue-farmer from year to year, or on a short lease, can have no possible interest in the improvement of the estate, or the wellbeing of the cultivators; and it was determined to make it the private interest of some class of men to attend to the public good. In the Bengal province almost all traces of proprietary right had been obliterated by Mahomedan oppression, or destroyed in the convulsions of the country; and since no rightful proprietor could be discovered, the government had recourse to the extraordinary expedient of making a present of the whole territory to the zemindars. Many of these had been hereditary collectors of the revenue, and might very easily, therefore, have been mistaken for lords of the land, as they actually were both by Lord Teignmouth and Lord Cornwallis; but it was not from any supposed right on their part that the Directors gave their assent to the plan, but merely as an act of grace and policy.

Great confusion was the result at first. New proprietors, or persons claiming to be such, sprang up to assert their rights; but the local government went recklessly on, even beyond the territorial limits assigned by the settlement, till they drew upon themselves, not only the reproaches of the natives, but the indignation of

the Directors at home. The zemindars themselves had the most reason of all to be dissatisfied, for they could only proceed against the ryots for rent by a slow and tedious suit in the zillah court, while the government collectors could come upon the zemindar for arrears of revenue by summary process, imprisoning the landlord and selling his estate. In twelve or fifteen years only a small number of this old aristocracy remained, the moneyed men of Calcutta and other cities having taken their places. In 1799, however, the zemindars had restored to them their former summary power of recovering rent from the ryots, and since then the revenue has suffered less by defaulters.

But the reader unacquainted with this subject must not be misled by our assertion that the Company gave away the proprietorship of the land into the idea that they gave away the land itself—or, in other words, that the zemindars became proprietors in the European meaning of the word. The rights of *occupancy* were maintained. The ryot remained as much as ever the possessor of the fields which his ancestors had cultivated, and from which he could not be lawfully driven so long as he paid his rent. The intention of the law was, in the words of the Directors themselves, "to confer on the different orders of the community a security of property which they never before enjoyed; to protect the landholders from arbitrary and oppressive demands on the part of government; to relieve the proprietors of small estates from the tyranny of the principal zemindars; and to free the whole body of merchants and manufacturers, and all the lower orders of the people, from the heavy impositions to which they have long been subjected." The evil was not in the new law, but in its breach by the zemindars. The Company, in imita-

tion of their predecessors, the Mahomedans, demanded one-half of the produce of the estate as land-tax, of which the Zemindar received one-eleventh part, together with the right to cultivate the waste lands for his own behoof. He was rarely satisfied with this, however, and although the peasantry have certainly benefited upon the whole by a change of masters and of system, it cannot be truly said that they are yet free from the oppression of their *quasi* landlords.*

Some writers deny that the improvement which has taken place in Bengal is the result of the Zemindary settlement, ascribing it rather to the increase of the foreign trade at the breaking up of the Company's monopoly. But were this the case, the same improvement would be visible in the other presidencies. In Bengal alone has a vast area been virtually added to the British dominions by the cultivation of the waste lands,—an advantage which has been gained (and herein, we conceive, lies the whole secret) by *a reduction of the land-tax.* The Company took the same as before for the lands previously under cultivation, but gave in the rest as a bonus to the landholder, which is equivalent to a reduction of rent on the whole estate. Before this took place, a clear half of the entire produce went to Government, and so far from its being found possible to reclaim the waste lands, many of those that were cultivated fell back year by year into jungle, and the abodes of men became the haunts of wild beasts. There is no doubt that the system was productive at first of great mischief and much injustice, which might have been avoided if it had been better considered by Lord Cornwallis; but the evil has

* The Government assessment is supposed by some writers to amount to sixty instead of fifty per centum on its produce. It was ordered to be made equal to the average of former years' collections.

passed away with the generation on which it fell, and the benefit alone remains. Not the least important part of this benefit is the lesson it has taught the Company in the formation of a permanent settlement, which must soon or late come for the other parts of the country.

The Zemindary settlement is as yet confined to Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, and it is necessary to describe the revenue systems which prevail elsewhere.

In establishing the Zemindary system, the Company, by one violent stretch of authority, got rid entirely of their assumed right to the property of the soil. They parcelled it out in estates, and declared certain persons to be the proprietors, under obligation to pay the customary tax on cultivated lands, but with the privilege of cultivating the waste lands for themselves. The ryots, therefore, became the tenants of these persons, although retaining a right of occupancy very little different, at least in theory, from the Zemindary right of proprietorship. In the RYOTWAR system, on the contrary, the ablest advocate of which was Sir Thomas Munro, the revenue settlement was made with reference to each individual ryot, and it wanted only the single element of permanence to constitute the occupant the proprietor of the soil. The tax was fixed either by means of a minute survey and separate estimate of each ryot's grounds, or by an apportionment to each of the aggregate sum demanded from the village or community to which he belonged; but in either case it was liable to arbitrary increase, according to the state of his fortunes, and he was thus deprived of all incentive to speculative industry. The following highly coloured and exaggerated picture of the Ryotwar system, drawn in 1823, is attributed to a member of the Government of Madras, and copied in Mr. Tucker's work on the revenue :—

"To convey to the mind of an English reader even a slight impression of the nature, operation, and results of the Ryotwar system of revenue, connected with the judicial arrangements of 1816, must be a matter of some difficulty. Let him, in the first place, imagine the whole landed interest—that is, all the landlords of Great Britain, and even the capital farmers, at once swept away from off the face of the earth; let him imagine a cess, or rent, fixed on every field in the kingdom, seldom under, generally above, its means of payment; let him imagine the land so assessed lotted out to the villagers, according to the number of their cattle and ploughs, to the extent of forty or fifty acres each. Let him imagine the revenue rated as above, leviable through the agency of one hundred thousand revenue officers, collected or remitted, at their discretion, according to their idea of the occupant's means of paying, whether from the produce of his land, or his separate property. And in order to encourage every man to act as a spy on his neighbour, and report his means of paying, that he may eventually save himself from extra demand, let him imagine all the cultivators of a village liable at all times to a separate demand, in order to make up for the failure of one or more individuals of their parish. Let him imagine collectors to every county, acting under the orders of a board, on the avowed principle of destroying all competition for labour by a general equalization of assessment; seizing and sending back runaways to each other. And lastly, let him imagine the collector the sole magistrate, or justice of the peace of the county, through the medium and instrumentality of whom alone any criminal complaint of personal grievance suffered by the subject can reach the superior courts. Let him imagine, at the same time, every subordinate officer employed in

the collection of the land revenue to be a police officer, vested with the power to fine, confine, put in the stocks, and flog, any inhabitant within his range, on any charge without oath of the accuser, or sworn recorded evidence in the case. If the reader can bring his mind to contemplate such a course, he may then form some judgment of the civil administration in progress of re-introduction into the territories under the Presidency of Madras, containing one hundred and twenty-five thousand square miles, and a population of twelve millions."

The advantage of the Ryotwar system is the interest it gives the Company in the increasing productiveness of the soil, an interest which, by the Zemindary system, they transferred to others. When Colonel Monro proposed to make the former permanent in Madras, like the latter in the eastern provinces, it was a part of his plan that the waste lands should continue to belong to Government, and the ryot be constituted proprietor only of those under actual cultivation. By this means he expected to increase the revenue, the population, and the prosperity of the country to an extent which resembled some golden dream of romance. But how did he propose to get the ryots to cultivate these waste lands? By a general *reduction of the land-tax* to one-third of the produce; and the Madras government, in rejecting the scheme, admitted it to be highly advisable and calculated to produce great ulterior benefits, if they could only afford to make the present sacrifice of rent required.

The MOUZAWAR, or village settlement, a trial of which was commenced in the Madras territory in 1808, may be looked upon as an attempt to reanimate what there is every reason to believe was the ancient Hindoo system. It may be described in one word as an arrangement entered into with each village community collectively

through its own hereditary officers, instead of with the ryot individually as in the Ryotwar system, and if established on a permanent footing it would be a virtual acknowledgment of the territorial rights enjoyed by these communities under their native sovereigns.

We have described the village communities as affording admirable materials, if well used, for the groundwork of a police system, and we should say the same thing with regard to the revenue system; but we think the Company perfectly justified in yielding nothing to a mere ancestral right, which has been abrogated by more than one conquest. They were neither morally nor politically bound to re-establish the institutions of India as they existed before the Mogul domination. The Mahomedans constituted themselves proprietors of the soil, and remained so for many generations, although in various parts of the country tacitly submitting, for their own convenience, to the habits of occupancy; and while establishing their dominion they added to the population a fifth part, consisting entirely of their own race. To suppose that the British, in collecting the fragments of this ruined empire, came under any obligation to restore the ancient Hindoo form of the institutions, or even to retain those their predecessors had ostensibly permitted to continue, is an idea for which we can find no authority in history. War and conquest are evils only when considered with reference to the bad passions that engender them, and the temporary miseries of individuals they produce. In themselves they are often those second causes behind which the providence of God is continually operating upon the destinies of mankind; and to us it seems as clear as the light of day that the western form of civilization is to extend gradually over the farthest east, and that the British nation has been chosen as its

agent. It is left to the men of each passing day, however, to consider their part of the work with reference to the temporary circumstances by which they are surrounded, and the patrons of the Mouzawar settlement are in all probability correct so far in their views, with the exception of the *right* they advocate and the *permanence* they demand.

It will be observed, further, that both the importance and the difficulty of the question of a land-tax is caused by the Company being shut out from the resource of indirect taxation, or imposts upon the comforts and luxuries of life, by the poverty of the people. But it may be stated as an incontrovertible fact, that the people are *retained* in this state of poverty by the pressure of the land-tax; and thus we always recur to the idea suggested during our glance at each of the revenue systems, that a reduction of the amount is the only apparent means, if resorted to under prudent conditions, of benefiting at once the Company and the millions of Hindostan.

The Zemindary and Ryotwar settlements are the two extremes of the system, but there is now in operation, or about to be so, in the western provinces, a settlement between the two, and yet which is not strictly speaking the Mouzawar. By this arrangement the heads of villages are to receive a lease, for twenty years, on terms which leave them the liberal profit of about thirty-five per centum on the gross produce they obtain from the cultivators; a compact which, although not directly changing the condition of the latter, would probably have the effect of erecting the former into a class of gentry or respectable middle rank, were the law of primogeniture introduced among the people. A suggestion which has lately been made of granting leases for fifty

years, on condition of the property devolving upon the eldest son, is worth considering, as its adoption would do away with the endless subdivisions of land both among Hindoos and Mahomedans which have hitherto kept the people down to one hopeless level.

The other revenues of the Company are derived from the monopolies they preserve in their hands of salt and opium, the sale of spirituous liquors, customs, stamp duties, mint duties, judicial fees, fines, and licenses, pilotage, post-office, tribute from protected states, &c. Of these items salt and opium are by far the most important.

Salt was the principal article of the inland trade which we have described as passing entirely into the hands of the Company's servants by their usurpation, as individuals, of the right of exemption from duties enjoyed by the Company collectively. When the Directors put a stop to the iniquities of the private trade, a duty of thirty-five per centum was fixed on salt for the benefit of the Company, which, in 1765, amounted to 120,000*l.* In 1766 the duty was increased to fifty per centum, and amounted to 160,000*l.* In 1772 the Company assumed the monopoly of the manufacture, and established a farming system which continued till 1787, when the article was sold by public auction. From Lord Cornwallis's permanent arrangements in 1793, the amount of duty in Bengal increased enormously, and the amount for all India is now far too great to admit of the smallest hope of the monopoly being speedily abandoned. Although salt, however, is a necessary of life, and the people pay for it several hundred times the cost of its production, it must not be supposed that the present price is really *felt* as a hardship even by the poorest. They never eat salted meat, and therefore never use the

article in large quantities; and they are hardly sensible, in buying the little they require for their daily consumption, that they are making an important contribution towards the expenses of government. The Company, in fact, so long as the land-tax continues to press as it does upon the body of the people, have no choice; they must continue to fix upon salt to make up the still existing deficiency in the revenue; for, with the exception of the rice produced in their own fields, there is no other article the natives would not do without.

Opium under the Mogul government was farmed out for an annual payment; but in 1773 the Company raised the drug for themselves by contract. In 1797 this system was changed, and the present plan of agency introduced, with public sales. At the close of the Mahratta war in 1818, Malwa fell into the hands of the British, and its opium was monopolized by the Company; but this form of revenue was subsequently relinquished, and a transit duty of one hundred and seventy-five rupees per chest of one hundred and forty pounds weight imposed upon Malwa opium. In the eastern provinces the monopoly is upheld by the greater encouragement given to this species of cultivation. The advances are made through rather an intricate intermediate agency. A gomastah takes charge of a district; under him is the sudder mattoo, who delivers the advances received from the former to the village mattoo; and he again is paymaster of the ryot. The first of these receives a salary and a small per-centage on the opium; the second a smaller salary and a per-centage; the third is rewarded by the Government collector according to his diligence; and the ryot is remunerated for the production of the article at the rate of three and a half rupees per seer, which weighs rather less than two pounds. This intermediate agency, though

productive of some abuses, is employed, at considerable expense to the Company, for the advantage of the cultivators themselves, who would otherwise require to be brought from great distances to the treasury of the collector. The increase in the cultivation has not taken place, as some have supposed, from compulsion, for the ryot is at liberty to plant his land with opium or not as he pleases; but he is in many respects better off, as will have been perceived, than other cultivators in India, and so is always glad to carry out the wishes, in this respect, of the Government.*

Without including the transit duties on the produce of Malwa, the revenue derived from opium may be stated at about a million sterling; that from salt amounts to about twice the sum; while the whole of the customs do not exceed a quarter of a million.

The total nett revenue of India, after deducting the expenses of collection, amounted, on an average of twenty-six years, from 1814 to 1840, to 14,035,847*l.*; the total charges at home and abroad, exclusive of the expenses of collection, to 14,801,639*l.*; and the annual average balance against the Company to 765,792*l.* In this estimate the expense of the expedition into Affghanistan is omitted, as being an extraordinary item which would prevent the reader from forming a clear idea of the real state of the Indian revenue and expenditure. The collective deficiency results in a debt amounting at present to about 32,000,000*l.*, exclusive of the bond debts at home.

The portion of the above charges paid in England averages 1,779,207*l.* per annum, which includes dividends on the Company's stock, interest on the home bond debt, salaries, pensions, half-pay, the invoice value of stores

* The Opium Trade; Historical, Moral, and Commercial. By Leitch Ritchie.

sent to India, cadet schools, &c. All this is clear gain to England from her connection with India, but it is only a very small portion of the gain. In order to form some notion of the aggregate amount, we must add the fortunes made by the English in India, roughly estimated at a million and a half; the profits on trade in India, chiefly from the sale of British manufactures, at as much more; and the profits made by the home manufacturers on six millions worth of goods consigned to India. Calculations of this kind must of course be extremely vague, but with every possible allowance, they at least serve as proof, that even if the deficiency we have set down should permanently continue, the balance in favour of England would still remain enormous. The debt, however, has been occasioned by *conquest;* and although in too many cases the conquest, through what appears to be a mistaken policy, has been left incomplete, it is very unlikely that any renewal, to an important extent, of extraordinary expenses will take place.

The Company's revenue arising from COMMERCE having ceased, it is not necessary to occupy much space with the subject. We have already described the origin and progress of the trade, up to the period when its results rendered a body of British merchants one of the great political powers of Hindostan; and we have now only to notice briefly its principal events down to the moment of its extinction.

Long after the British first became supreme in Bengal, it had appeared to be carried on for the sole benefit of the Company's servants individually. The Company as a body derived no profit, while their functionaries amassed large fortunes; and the very same thing went on at home, where, in spite of the gloomy aspect of affairs, the rapacity of the shareholders extorted enor-

mous dividends. In 1773, when they had a heavy stock of tea upon hand, they were induced, by an offer from the Government of a drawback of the entire custom duty, to send a large quantity to America. The incensed colonists would not permit the home-taxed article to land; and one dark night, when the ships were lying in the harbour of Boston, they were boarded by a party of men disguised like Mohawk Indians, who threw the precious commodity overboard into the sea. This loss was followed up next year by another, which they sustained in consequence of the duty being raised to more than centum per centum upon the cost. Their sales for five years averaged only five million five hundred and fifty-nine thousand and seven pounds, instead of eight million seventy-five thousand seven hundred and ninety-four pounds, the average of the five preceding years.

About this time the Company were expelled, by the intrigues of the Dutch and Spanish, from a factory they had established on one of the Sooloo Islands as a central station for trade with Hindostan, the Archipelago, China, and Japan.

In 1778 the commerce of the French East India Company was utterly destroyed on the continent of India by the arms of the Company.

In the following year the Company may be said to have revived, from absolutely disinterested motives, the indigo trade, which had long constituted an important item in their imports, but which they had given up in favour of the West Indies. The latter were compelled, in 1747, to abandon the cultivation in consequence of the high duties heaped upon this article by Government; and the Company, stepping into the relinquished field, re-established the trade at an expense of 80,000*l*., and then handing it over to their civil employés and the free

merchants, assisted these individuals by advances till it became a great branch of the national commerce.

In 1784 the window duty was established in England, by what is known as the Commutation Act; the enormous duties on tea, with the exception of a uniform twelve and a half per centum, being so commuted. The consequence was, that the Company's sales increased in a few years from five or six million pounds to above twenty million pounds; and that in China a proportionate increase took place in the consumption of British tin and woollens, and of course a proportionate decrease in the bullion remittances.

In 1795 the Company introduced into India the Italian method of winding silk, which greatly increased the demand for the Bengal article, although at a loss during the next ten years of not far from a million sterling to the Company.

The low price of tea having established it as an article of general use, to many almost of necessity, the Government was able to tamper with the duty, which now began to rise progressively without checking the consumption. At this time the Company made many efforts to introduce the hemp of India into use in England, but after an expenditure beyond the amount of sales of 45,000*l.* they were constrained to desist from further importation till the prejudices against it should subside. At the desire of ministers, however, they resumed operations at the end of 1800, when the differences with Russia threatened to cut off our supply from that country; but before their cargoes could reach England another political change had taken place, and Russian hemp was again in possession of the market. This did not discourage the Directors, however; for in 1807 they made an offer to Government to import the article for the use of the

navy *without profit*, which was accepted, and hemp became a regular component part of the trade between India and England.

We have mentioned in another chapter that the Company's trade was first interfered with in 1793, by the public being permitted to export and import goods, with certain exceptions, in their ships, and that in 1814 the Indian monopoly wholly terminated. The fallacies current at the time, even among intelligent and disinterested persons, were completely disproved by the event, and it was shown at once that the necessity for a privileged company must have long ceased. The very slow effect of the partial opening of 1793 is proved by the fact, that during the five years ending with 1807-8 the annual average imports into India by British private traders amounted only to 305,496*l.* During the five years ending with 1811 it had increased to an equality with the Company's imports, which were as follow:—1807, 952,416*l.*; 1808, 919,544*l.*; 1809, 866,153*l.*; 1810, 1,010,815*l.*; and in 1811, 1,033,816*l.* The exports of the Company in the first year of the open trade amounted to 826,558*l.*; and in 1817 they had declined to 638,382*l.*, and in 1828 to 488,601*l.* Those of private traders, on the other hand, at these three epochs were 1,048,132*l.* 2,750,333*l.* and 3,979,072*l.* Since then the trade has gradually increased to upwards of six millions.

It had been supposed by the advocates of the monopoly, that the sale of European goods in India had, in the Company's hands, reached its maximum; that the unchangeable habits of the people rendered an extension impossible; and that to open the trade would merely be to transfer its profits to new parties, and ruin those by whom it had been founded. All this was erroneous, for there no profits to transfer; the Company could not be

ruined by the loss of a losing trade; and the people of India were and are as ready and willing to buy, in proportion to their means, as any other people in the world. By the time the trade was opened to private enterprise, a new class of gentry had been created in Bengal by the operation of the permanent settlement of the land-tax. These became important customers; and when the condition of the ryot in his turn meets with the same attention, and the efforts of the Company in his favour with the same success, an addition may be looked for to the number of customers of many scores of millions. The imagination, in fact, is oppressed with the mighty prospects of British commerce in the east.

It may be said that the ryots live, and that the labouring classes of England do no more; but the difference between them on the point in question is, that the latter, in the midst of all their poverty, contribute indirectly a very large sum towards the extension of trade and the improvement of the arts of civilization, while the former give little more than their labour. An Indian labourer receives about a tenth part of the remuneration of an English labourer, and cannot hope for more till a change takes place either in his relations with the revenue, or in the value of the produce of the land. In England the wages of labour rise or fall according to the state of its supply; but in India the condition of the bulk of the people depends upon the productiveness of their fields and the value of the produce, of which their share is about one-half. They have therefore a more direct stake in the prosperity of their country than the lower classes of England; and the question as to the mode of ameliorating their condition is proportionably less complicated. To develope the resources of India by encouraging her natural productions, and inducing the flow of capital into

the country, is the present policy therefore, we need hardly say, of the Company; and of late years the Government has seconded their efforts by removing sundry discriminative duties (on sugar, rum, and other articles) intended for the protection of the West Indies.

The success which attended the opening of the Indian trade was followed, as a natural consequence, by the loss of the Chinese monopoly of the Company, and in 1834, as we have related, they ceased entirely to be a commercial body. The result as regards trade is, that the amount of British goods imported at Canton alone during the year 1844 is valued at 3,451,000*l.*, and that the exports of Chinese goods for British markets from the same port during the same time was not less than 3,383,000*l.*

Of the articles above mentioned, the exportation of Indigo has now increased to between seven and eight million pounds; of raw silk to between one and two million pounds, besides half a million pieces of manufactured silk; and of hemp to seventy thousand hundredweights. Great Britain, on the other hand, instead of one hundred and seventy thousand yards of cotton goods which she exported to India in 1814, now sends one hundred and fifty million yards, besides fifteen million pounds of twist and yarn. This has of course greatly injured the manufactures of India; but there is good reason to believe that the loss will eventually be compensated by the establishment of a great trade in the raw article, of which she already sends to England one hundred million pounds. But in treating in another place on the resources and prospects of the country, we must touch upon such topics more at large, and, in the mean time, the following table of tonnage outwards and

inwards will suffice to give a good general idea of the magnitude and prospects of the trade.

Number of ships, and their tonnage, that entered the ports of the United Kingdom from the East India Company's territories and Ceylon, from 1831 to 1842, inclusive; and that cleared outwards from the United Kingdom for the same.

ENTERED.			CLEARED.		
Years.	Ships.	Tonnage.	Years.	Ships.	Tonnage.
1831	150	63·566	1831	137	59·721
1832	168	72·895	1832	193	85·260
1833	182	76·820	1833	204	83·769
1834	186	75·461	1834	197	90·833
1835	216	89·449	1835	219	96·157
1836	227	97·034	1836	267	117·784
1837	281	118·763	1837	231	106·927
1838	233	106·004	1838	233	117·824
1839	299	133·294	1839	253	121·865
1840	288	138·883	1840	372	176·028
1841	444	207·075	1841	454	212·103
1842	430	191·378	1842	397	202·101

The above table will be better understood when we say, that the average number of ships employed before the opening of the trade in 1814, was about fifty; and their burthen from thirty-five to forty-five thousand tons.

It is proper to observe that the increase in the exportation of British goods, indicates not merely a commercial but a moral change in the people of India. It shows that Commerce is performing its work of revolution; that the so-called "permanent" form of eastern civilization is breaking up; and that an assimilation is taking place *pro tanto* in the tastes and habits of the two nations.

CHAPTER V.

ECCLESIASTICAL, EDUCATIONAL, AND OTHER ESTABLISHMENTS.

"THE religion of the heathen," says Gibbon, "was not merely a speculative doctrine, professed in the schools, or preached in the temples; the innumerable deities and rights of Polytheism were closely interwoven with every circumstance of business or pleasure, of public or of private life; and it seemed impossible to escape the observance of them without at the same time renouncing the commerce of mankind, and the amusements and affairs of society." This was to a great extent true of the nations of the west of whom it was written; but it applies in a still more especial manner to the Hindoos; and it accounts for the extreme difficulty that has always attended the conversion from an absurd and paltry superstition of so mild and tolerant a people.

When the Portuguese first settled in India they found, it is said, nearly a hundred Nestorian churches on the coast of Malabar, to which the Chaldean faith had been

carried from Antioch, the patriarchal see of their bishops, to take root and grow quietly and gradually in the very hot-bed of paganism. The zeal of the Portuguese, however, was not exercised in converting the natives, but in persecuting their brother Christians because they would not acknowledge the supremacy of the Pope; and the Hindoos must have been both puzzled and disquieted by the new phasis that was presented to them of the religion of the "meek and holy Jesus." When the Dutch brought with them another form of Christianity, the very same scenes of violence and persecution were renewed. Their rivals had burned the Episcopal palace they found, together with the Chaldean and Syriac books which were deposited in the churches, and occasionally a few heretics in the pyres of Goa; and the reformed Dutch fastened in turn upon the college and library of the Jesuits at Cranganore, the convent of the Franciscans, and the cathedral of the Christians of Saint Thomas. As the commerce of the Portuguese declined, their religious zeal increased; and as the Dutch waxed wealthy, their East India Company contented themselves with translating the Scriptures into the Malay language. An amusing account is given of one of those wholesale conversions of the former, which at one time astonished and delighted all Christendom. In the year 1709 the Malabar church bought some four score slaves during a famine, the people, as was always customary in India, parting with their liberty to preserve their lives. These acquisitions, which cost them from eight to sixteen shillings a head, they led out in procession on an appointed day, to the sound of the native drums and flutes used in the service of the pagodas; and having performed the baptismal act with great pomp, by sprinkling water on their faces, and concluded the rite by scattering small coins liberally among the spectators, they returned joy-

fully to the temple to thank God for the brands they had thus summarily plucked from the burning!

The British appear to have set out with the determination never to interfere, as a State, with the faith of the Indians; and the Company adopted unconsciously the maxim, deduced from his own personal experience by the Mogul Emperor Jehangir, that "a prince who wishes to have subjects must take them with all the trumpery and baubles of their religion." But what Christianity gained by this collective forbearance was lost by the misconduct of the English individually, of whom the natives said, as reported by Sir Thomas Roe in 1615, "Christian religion, devil religion; Christian much drunk; Christian much do wrong, much beat, much abuse others."

The view the Company took of their duty was coincided in by Parliament; and in 1793 the Bishop of St. Asaph promulgated in the House of Lords the startling doctrine that even the obligation, said to be so incumbent upon Christians, to promote their faith throughout the world had ceased with the supernatural gifts which attended the commission of the Apostles. Before this time the number of clergymen in the British settlements was only six; but it was now increased to eighteen. Of these the full complement in Bengal was nine, but in 1798, according to Tennant, their actual number seldom exceeded five or six. Two of these were in Calcutta, and the rest of the presidency therefore was committed to three or four individuals; so that the presence of a clergyman was seldom seen or even expected at the ceremonies of marriage, baptisms, or funerals, which were all performed by the civil magistrate. Buchanan states, that "the two armies lately in the field in Hindostan and in the Deccan had not one chaplain," and

that "many of the British settlements and factories of the first importance had no other knowledge or distinction of the Christian Sabbath than the display of the British flag." Tennant had seldom heard of any sermon being delivered except by his Majesty's chaplain, and those at Calcutta. "Hence," says he, "it must happen that many persons have left England at an early age, and resided in India perhaps for twenty or thirty years, without once having heard divine service till their return."

By the charter of 1793 a bishop was appointed for all British India, and an archdeacon for the presidencies of Bengal, Madras and Bombay. In 1823 the bishop of Calcutta was empowered to admit persons to holy orders within his diocese; and in 1833 two new bishoprics were constituted, one for Madras, and one for Bombay, both being subject to the former as metropolitan. At the same time two chaplains of the Church of Scotland, inducted by the presbytery of Edinburgh, were ordered to be maintained at each presidency.

The present ecclesiastical establishment in Bengal consists of twenty chaplains, thirty-six assistant chaplains, and two ministers of the Church of Scotland, besides the metropolitan bishop of Calcutta, an archdeacon, and a registrar; in Madras, of eleven chaplains, eighteen assistant chaplains, and two ministers of the Church of Scotland, besides the bishop, archdeacon, and registrar; and in Bombay of ten chaplains, eighteen assistant chaplains, and two ministers of the Church of Scotland, besides the bishop, archdeacon, and registrar. Thus in half a century the ecclesiastical establishment has been increased in number from six to a hundred and twenty-five.

It would be satisfactory to be able to state that the work of conversion had made progress in proportion;

but this is not the case either with reference to the labours of the establishment, or to those of the various missionaries; which latter commenced in 1792. The difficulties, in fact, are so great that Major Scott Waring declared in 1808, that he considered them to be insurmountable by human means; but before subscribing to this opinion, it will be prudent to inquire what these difficulties are.

The Hindoos can hardly be said to be bigoted to their religion, since they are tolerant of all others. They declare that there are many roads to heaven, and they admit that Christianity may be the one appointed by God for the salvation of the English. What then are the obstacles, more especially since freethinking has of late years become the fashion among educated Hindoos? The obstacles are Caste and Law, which are the pillars of the national superstition; the one depriving a convert of his inheritance, and the other thrusting him forth from his tribe and family. That the prejudices of caste, which withstand so triumphantly the efforts of the missionaries, are to be dispelled by education has now been demonstrated beyond a doubt; while it is understood that at this moment the Company have it in contemplation to introduce into the proposed *lex loci*, a provision that property shall descend without reference to creed. One of these is useless without the other. "Young India," as the *esprits forts* of the day are termed, being unwilling to abandon its worldly possessions or prospects and take up the Cross, clings to the Vedanta philosophy as an integral part of Brahminism, but would soon loose its hold if it could do so without so serious a sacrifice. This alteration of the law will be worth a whole army of missionaries—or, to speak more generously of these devoted men, it will act as their pioneer by

removing the obstructions which have hitherto rendered their advance almost impossible.

It is in the power of the Company, we repeat, by an alteration of the native law not so formidable as the abolition of the sati, to overthrow that selfish interest which forms one great bulwark of the existing superstition; but it is only by the comparatively slow process of education that the other can be worn away—the prejudice of Caste.

When the British first turned their attention to the subject of education in India, they had not the slightest idea of its importance to themselves. All they proposed to do was to obtain for their courts of justice a supply of natives properly qualified to expound the law, and with this view they established the Mahomedan College at Calcutta in 1781, and the Sanskrit College at Benares in 1792. In 1813 the Government at home determined to go a little farther, and by the new charter of that period 10,000*l.* a year was set apart for "the revival and promotion of literature, and the encouragement of the learned natives of India, and for the introduction and promotion of a knowledge of the sciences among the inhabitants of the British territories." The idea, however, appeared to be new to the Indian authorities. It did not press. It had no practical bearing so far as they could see; and ten years were suffered to elapse before they took any steps to carry out the intentions of the legislature. In 1823 a committee of public instruction was formed, to ascertain the state of public education and to report on the best means of improving it; and this committee became the agent of the measures they recommended.

Under their auspices a Sanskrit College at Calcutta was speedily completed; two new colleges founded at

Delhi and Agra for oriental literature; and the printing commenced on an extensive scale of Sanskrit and Arabic works. But besides this they fostered the Hindoo college at Calcutta for English literature and science, which had been commenced in 1816 by the natives themselves; established English classes in connection with the oriental colleges; founded at Delhi in 1829, a separate institution for the learning of the west; and translated various European works of science into Arabic.

Thus was a most important change of system commenced; for it is manifest that the mere encouragement of native learning could have no possible effect in subverting native prejudices; and to teach the sciences contained in a living though foreign language—the language of the Government and their employés — through the medium of Arabic and Sanskrit (the Latin and Greek of India) was at best a waste of time and labour. To spend the paltry sum appropriated for the instruction of a million people in educating a few in the obsolete learning of the brahmins and Mahomedan doctors, and at the same time to offer a premium for the neglect of such studies by promoting English scholars (as was necessarily done) to such offices as brought them in contact with Europeans, was unquestionably an error.

In Europe, where no such principle of cohesion exists as in Asia, the form of society is susceptible of perpetual change without destruction. The middle classes had sprung gradually up from the prosperity of trade, fostered as it had been by the magnificence of chivalry; and after the revival of learning the improvement of the vernacular languages was imperatively demanded by a class of persons who were neither nobles by birth, nor priests and scholars by profession. What Greek literature had done for Roman—Roman literature did for the

languages of the modern world; and in process of time the *barbarians* learned in their own tongue to rival, but not to forsake, their classic masters. Now, if we only imagine that the dead tongues which at that time acted like a vivifying power upon the living ones, had themselves been the common speech of a great nation which possessed a direct interest in infusing the literature they embodied into the languages of its neighbours—will it not appear evident that European refinement might have advanced at still more rapid strides than it did? Will it not appear evident that these learned tongues might have become the habitual speech of at least the upper classes of the politer countries of Europe?*

Two parties, however, arose in the committee; one the patrons of the national learning, and the other the advocates of the English and the vernacular tongues; and in 1835, Lord Auckland siding with the latter, the system of educating the people now pursued was fairly entered upon.

Mr. Trevelyan states, that in 1838 there were forty seminaries instead of the fourteen which existed previous to the change; and that there were upwards of six thousand students instead of three thousand three hundred and ninety-eight. Of the latter number two hundred and eighteen learned Arabic, and four hundred and seventy-three Sanskrit.

"In extending our operations," say the committee in their report of 1835, "we endeavour to keep two objects simultaneously in view. We try to widen the foundations of the system, at the same time that we consolidate and improve it. It would be our aim, did the funds at our command admit of it, to carry the former process on,

* From an anonymous paper by the author of this work.

until an elementary school for instruction in the vernacular languages should be established in every village in the country, and the latter, until a college for Western learning should be endowed at the principal town of every commissionership, or circle of two or three zillahs, and ultimately in every zillah."

The general superintendence was vested, and remains so, in a general committee at Calcutta, including several native members; while the affairs of each seminary are managed by a local committee selected from all classes of the community. The pupils pay for the ordinary school-books they use, and also a small sum for their instruction. All castes are admitted to the same class without distinction—a circumstance which of itself must act powerfully in dissolving the prejudices of the people. In the report from which we have quoted, the committee consider it of the chief importance that there should be an efficient professor of English literature at the head of each college; but since then Government have discovered that they cannot *afford* the expense, and in the more recent establishments the gentlemen who formerly held the second rank — namely, persons qualified to teach the exact sciences—have taken their place.

A most important department of the new system is the medical college, projected by Lord William Bentinck, and instituted only after a warm discussion as to its possibility. A committee appointed to inquire into the subject, declared that "times were much changed, and the difficulties that stood in the way no longer insurmountable;" but they of course considered a knowledge of English an indispensable preliminary to the study of medicine, "because that language combines within itself the circle of all the sciences, and incalculable wealth of printed works and illustrations; circumstances that give

it obvious advantages over the Oriental languages, in which are only to be found the crudest elements of science, or the most irrational substitutes for it."

"The peculiar glory of the medical college, however," says Mr. Trevelyan, "consists in the victory which it has obtained over the most intractable of the national prejudices, which often survives a change of religion, and was supposed to be interwoven, if anything could be, with the texture itself of the Hindu mind. Brahmins and other high-caste Hindus may be seen in the dissecting-room of the college handling the knife, and demonstrating from the human subject with even more than the indifference of European professional men. Operations at the sight of which English students not unfrequently faint, are regarded with the most eager interest, and without any symptom of loathing, by the self-possessed Hindu. Subjects for dissection are easily and unobjectionably obtained in a country in which human life is more than usually precarious, and where the respect felt for the dead is much less than in Europe. An injection of arsenic into the veins prevents that rapid decomposition which the heat of the climate would otherwise engender. There is now nothing to prevent the people of India from attaining to the highest eminence in the medical art; and we shall soon be able to make the college entirely national, by replacing the foreign by indigenous professors."

The present medical establishment of the Company in actual operation consists of seven hundred and thirty surgeons and assistant-surgeons, of whom three hundred and fifty belong to Bengal, two hundred and thirty to Madras, and one hundred and fifty to Bombay. In addition to these, when required, there are also supernumeraries. The highest grade in this service is the medical board of each presidency, consisting of three senior officers

ranking with colonels, with a surgeon or assistant-surgeon as secretary. The next is that of the superintending surgeons, of whom there are a certain number attached to each presidency, with the rank of lieutenant-colonels; and the last, that of the surgeons and assistant-surgeons, ranking with captains and lieutenants. All these officers belong, strictly speaking, to the army, but some are appointed to do duty at civil stations. Promotion is regulated entirely by seniority. It matters not what the deficiencies of the individual may be, he must arrive at last at the medical board; and no brilliance of talent, or success in practice, can hasten his progress.

The medical officers in charge of native troops and jails are assisted by one or more natives called sub-assistant-surgeons, who are educated at the medical college, where the courses comprehend anatomy, chemistry, surgery, materia medica, physic, and practical dissection. Their duty in the mean time is to compound medicines, attend the sick, and perform the minor operations of surgery.

A surgeon appointed to a civil station attends the prisoners in the jail, as well as the few civilians and their families, and in order to eke out a very small salary he has sometimes the charge of the post office or the registrarship, and is permitted to embark in trade. At the capitals of the presidencies he may make a handsome income, the fees given both by Europeans and natives being high, and usually paid in the form of a yearly stipend; but in the Mofussil he has little to depend upon but his professional pay. Thus his successful rivals are the native doctors, whose fee, even when their reputation is great, seldom exceeds one rupee, and who are therefore consulted on all ordinary occasions. When he is called in to prescribe, however, being of an inferior caste to his

patient, he must be careful not to contaminate the medicines by his touch; and if his visit be to a lady, he must in general be contented with feeling her hand extended to him through a nearly closed door, or in more serious cases with seeing her tongue protruded through a little hole in the bed curtain.

Before the establishment of the medical college, the healing art was taught in classes attached to the Arabic and Sanskrit colleges at Calcutta; but this was the art of Galen, Hippocrates, and the Shasters, with only as much knowledge of the human frame as could be collected from comparative anatomy and wooden or waxen models.

As for the education of the natives by themselves, it is a curious and instructive subject; and the ample details given by Mr. Adam, the government commissioner, in his various reports might furnish materials for a volume. When there is such a thing as a school-house in Bengal, it is a thatched shed built of mud, branches, and leaves, and the cost of its erection never exceeds ten rupees. More frequently, however, the scholars assemble in some public or private building lent them for the purpose, or under the shade of a tree, or in the open air, protected by a few umbrella-like sheds open at the sides. The professional income of the teachers, including presents of food, clothes, cooking utensils, &c., varies from two to three rupees per month—that is, at the maximum, 3*l.* 12*s.* a year.

The scholars are chiefly Hindoos. In the districts visited by Mr. Adam the Hindoo population is to the Mussulman in the proportion of more than two to one; but the proportion of scholars is eighteen to one in favour of the former. The greater degradation and ignorance, he tells us, of the lower classes of Mussulmans,

when compared with the corresponding classes of the Hindoo population, is "a simple undeniable matter of fact."

With regard to the castes of the scholars, two most important facts are stated: first, that by far the greater number in the vernacular schools are Brahmins, who seek this kind of instruction in order to fit them for prohibited employments; and second, that many of the lower castes learn to read, write, and keep accounts, whose hitherto unheard of encroachment upon the outskirts of learning "is a spontaneous movement in native society, the effect of a strong foreign rule unshackled by native usages and prejudices, and protecting all in the enjoyment of equal rights."

The scholar usually enters school when five or six years old, and leaves it at fifteen or sixteen. His first task is to form the letters of the alphabet on the ground with a slip of bamboo; and he is then taught to write them on a palm leaf with a reed pen and charcoal ink, the master having set him a copy on the same leaf with an iron stile. He now learns to read and get by heart the cowrie, numeration, and other tables. The third stage of instruction is devoted to writing on the plantain leaf, in which the commonest forms of letter writing, &c., are taught. At the same time the student attempts arithmetic, beginning with addition and subtraction, and applies himself to various rules used in agricultural and commercial business. In the fourth and last stage of instruction he writes upon paper, and composes business letters, petitions, &c.; and having devoted a year to these and to the completion of his arithmetical studies, his vernacular education is supposed to be finished. This, however, is a complete course which many of the masters are unable to give. Printed books are rarely used, some-

times not even written ones, the scholars learning from the oral dictation of the master. The slokes, or brief sententious sayings committed to memory — some of which with other classical compositions are given in the Calcutta Review, and form a valuable appendix to Mr. Adam's report — are frequently indelicate and always stupid. The discipline of the schools is so severe that the students frequently run off, and one boy is mentioned by the Calcutta reviewer, who remained for three days on the top of a cocoa nut-tree, defending himself with the natural ammunition of his fortress.

In the schools above described the medium of instruction in Bengal is chiefly Bengali even for the Mahomedans; but in the schools of learning the media are the Arabic for the latter, the Sanskrit for the former, and the Persian for both. It is worthy of remark that even in the Persian schools there are considerably more Hindoo than Mussulman scholars, from which Mr. Adam draws the natural conclusion that no difficulty would attend the introduction of English, which is now what Persian was, the language of the government and the courts. The Persian teachers make five or six rupees per month, and their course of instruction is more comprehensive than that of the vernacular teachers. The Arabic schools are utterly useless and insignificant, but occasionally the two languages are taught to some purpose by the same master. The Sanskrit are those in which the literature, law, philosophy, and religion of the Hindoos are taught, and are chiefly frequented by brahmins. They are sometimes endowed, but in general are the speculations of the individual teachers; who, however, so far from calculating upon fees from their pupils, always give them instruction and frequently board and lodging gratuitously. The explanation is, that it is the

custom among the Hindoos to invite learned men to their numerous domestic festivals, when they bestow gifts upon them in proportion to the estimation in which they are held as teachers. To these meetings the teachers take their most distinguished pupils, who share in the liberality of the host to such an extent, that instead of paying for their learning they are sometimes able to make a trade of their scholarship, till in their turn they become teachers themselves.

In these schools the period of scholastic study varies from twelve to twenty-two years; and its nature may be told in a single remark made by Mr. Adam, which we give also for the sake of the hope it conveys:—"The same men who have wasted and are still wasting their learning and their powers in weaving complicated alliterations, re-compounding absurd and vicious fictions, and revolving in perpetual circles of metaphysical abstractions, never ending still beginning, have professed to me their readiness to engage in any sort of literary composition that would obtain the patronage of Government."

There are no native female schools among either the Hindoos or Mahomedans; and in the very rare instances in which girls receive any instruction at all at home, the parents conceal the fact as if it were a disgrace to the family.

It may be collected from the reports thus noticed that only seven and three quarters per centum of the children in Bengal of an age fit for school receive any instruction at all; that only half a million children throughout the entire province enjoy even the slightest elementary education; and that upwards of six millions of the school going age, and upwards of two and half million adults in the eastern part of India alone remain without any instruction whatever.

BOOK V.

A GEOGRAPHICAL OUTLINE OF INDIA; ITS PRODUCTIONS, RESOURCES, AND CAPABILITIES; ITS CONNECTION WITH EUROPE BY MEANS OF STEAM NAVIGATION; AND A COMPARATIVE VIEW OF THE CONDITION OF THE COUNTRY UNDER HINDOO, MAHOMEDAN, AND BRITISH RULE.

CHAPTER I.

A GEOGRAPHICAL OUTLINE OF INDIA.

India, as described by the ancients, comprehended the entire tract of country from Persia in the west to China in the east, and was bounded on the north by the frozen plains of Tartary, and in the south by the tropical verdure of the Eastern Archipelago. Hindostan Proper, however, lies within the Himalaya, the Indus, the Brahmapootra and the Deccan, although the countries of the last-mentioned boundary are usually included by Europeans. Under the Mogul emperors their dominion was sometimes confined to a small territory round the city of

Delhi, all depending upon the power and genius of the prince; but in the time of Akbar a regular survey of the country was made and its divisions laid down with pen and ink,—a kind of record which survives the fall of dynasties and the revolutions of empires.

Akbar divided Hindostan Proper into eleven soubahs, or viceroyalties, viz., Lahore, Moultan, Ajmere, Delhi, Agra, Oude, Allahabad, Bahar, Bengal, Malwa, and Guzerat; to which Cabool was afterwards added in the north-west, and Berar, Candeish, and Ahmednugger (Aurungabad) in the south, or Deccan. Aurungzebe grasped at nearly the whole of the Deccan, and after his death the empire fell to pieces by its own weight. Under the British the line has been brought within Cabool and Lahore on the north-west; on the east it has stretched to some distance beyond the Brahmapootra; and in the south it is drawn by the sea. The difference between the new rule and the old consists in the apparent permanence of the power of the former, its indifference to names and its possession of realities. The soubahs were provinces of the empire only when the soubahdars were too weak to set the Mogul at defiance; whereas British India is interspersed with kingdoms and principalities which are permitted to retain a nominal independence only till it is convenient and agreeable to absorb them. The Mogul claimed all India by right of conquest; the British demand to be considered as nothing more than the paramount power, and have recourse to conquest and absorption only when this demand is withstood.

In the Akberian survey, it will be seen, following the soubahs successively as we have given them, the view commences with the western and north-western frontier; it then, setting out from the upper part of what is now British India, follows the vast and irregular line down to

the Bay of Bengal; and finally intersects the country backwards from east to west taking in Malwa and Guzerat. On this foundation we shall proceed in endeavouring to give some general idea of India according to its present territorial divisions; although we shall require to carry on the sketch so as to embrace the whole of the Deccan in the most comprehensive meaning of the word.

There seems to be a strong probability that the Mogul soubah of Lahore will one day form a province of British India, of which it is the threshold on the north-west. It is usually divided into two portions, the Punjab or lowlands, and the Kohistan or highlands; and the former subdivided into doabs, or tracts of country between two rivers. The Punjab is fertile near the rivers but generally sandy, and produces wheat, rice, &c., sugar and tobacco. Wheat and other grains are the chief productions of the upper country. The Sikhs, who are the ruling population, though by no means the most numerous, were first heard of as a religious sect, opposing the prejudices of Brahminism, at the beginning of the fifteenth century; and, although frequently almost destroyed, they contrived during four centuries to retain somewhat of the appearance of a compact body. In 1805 Runjeet Singh, one of their chiefs, began to elevate himself from the crowd, and by 1812 had made himself master of the whole of the Punjab. He was desirous also of reducing those of his compeers who were established on the south east of the Sutlege; but the British, who looked tranquilly on at the organization of a powerful state on their natural frontier towards Europe, had some prejudices connected with the river which Alexander the Great could not overstep, and frustrated the designs of the usurper by establishing a military post at Loodianah. In 1809 they entered into a treaty of friend-

ship and alliance with him; to which—or to their own supposed interest—they at a later period sacrificed Dost Mahomed, bringing on the disastrous Affghan war. Runjeet Singh was more successful in pointing his incursions towards the west and the south, his progress in the latter quarter, down the Indus, being only stopped by the interference of the British. After his death the state fell back into a worse anarchy than that from which his genius had rescued it; and up to this day the horrors perpetrated by the chiefs in their struggles for supremacy are a disgrace to humanity.

Moultan, the second Akberian soubah, was one of the largest provinces of the empire, extending from Lahore (of which it included part) to the sea. The capital city, bearing the same name, is supposed to be the Malli of Alexander, and is noted for its silks and carpets. The territory of Bhawulpore lies to the south and south-west of Moultan Proper, and partakes of its soil and climate, being hot and dry, but fertile near the rivers, till towards the east all traces of vegetation are gradually lost as it merges in the Desert. The most interesting portion of Moultan, Sinde, has lately been added to the British territories in the manner already described. Owing to the misgovernment of the Ameers, the country appears to have been for a long time past falling back into jungle; but from its natural capabilities it may be expected to become, under British rule, one of the richest provinces of the empire. At this moment it exports considerable quantities of rice and ghee; but it is adapted likewise for the extensive cultivation of cotton, sugar, indigo, and other valuable products demanding a rich alluvial soil and a high temperature. This valley of the Indus must always be of importance to the possessors of India; but at present the mighty volume of waters is of compara-

tively small advantage to commerce, as it rolls through a wilderness where science and capital have not as yet begun their rarely unsuccessful contentions with the powers of nature. The bulk of the population on the eastern side of the Indus consists of Hindoos, who form the commercial and labouring classes; and although crushed to the earth by ages of Mahomedan despotism, are distinguished for their mechanical ingenuity and skill in business. On the western side are the Beloochees, brave, proud, and indolent, who present in the nineteenth century a tolerably correct likeness of the military caste of central Europe in the tenth.

Ajmere, or Rajahstan, the third soubah, comprehends the Great Desert, or rather is comprehended in it, and is surrounded by the ancient provinces of Moultan, Delhi, Malwa, and Guzerat. The Desert has numerous oases of greater or less extent, and there by the first gleam of history we find the Rajpoots congregated in separate states, and living under a kind of feudal regime. In the first book of this work we have described the Prince of Mewar as one of the four potentates among whom India was divided; and to this day he is reckoned, under the style of Rana of Oudipore, the king of the Hindoos. The royal clan of Rhatores, after their chief the Rajah of Canouj (another of the ancient kings) had been defeated by the Ghori Sultan, founded Marwar. The third principal state is Jeypoor, and from the dismemberment of the territories of these three most of the others have been formed.

The states of Rajpootana were frequently ravaged, sometimes laid under tribute, but never permanently subdued by the Mahomedans; but their dissensions with each other, as well as the isolation of their territories, prevented them from rising into political importance. In

later times some portions of them were seized by the Mahrattas, and plundered by the Pindarees, and the chiefs repeatedly solicited an alliance with the British, which at length was granted in 1818, on their acknowledging the new power to be supreme in India. The treaty with the various states is different, according to circumstances; but the terms of that with the Rana of Oudipore will serve to give a general idea of the connection. The British Government engages to protect the principality and territory of Oudipoor. The Maharajah consents to act in subordinate co-operation with that Government, and will not enter into any negotiation with any chief or state without its knowledge and sanction. The Maharajah will not commit aggressions upon any one; and if by accident a dispute should arise, it shall be submitted to the arbitration and award of the British Government. One-fourth of the revenues of Oudipoor shall be paid annually as tribute for five years; and after that term, three-eighths in perpetuity. The troops of the state of Oudipoor shall be furnished according to its means at the requisition of the British Government. The Maharajah shall always be absolute ruler of his own country, and the British jurisdiction shall not be introduced into that principality.

The lower class of the population is composed almost entirely of Jats, while the chiefs and soldiery are Rajpoots. This country has shown a remarkable improvement under British rule, from the agriculturists finding themselves protected from the extortion and robbery to which they were formerly subject, and the internal trade accordingly has very much increased. The Rajpoots, who were formerly little better than freebooters, now compose a large portion of the Indian army.

The next of the imperial soubahs is Delhi, which com-

mences in the north-west with the protected Sikh states, comprising about seventeen thousand square miles, in the midst of which lie various portions of British territory, either obtained by negotiation or lapsed to the paramount power through the failure of heirs. Then come the British districts of Ghurwal and Kumaon wrested from the Nepaulese, and the valuable country of Rohilkund; the last stretching down to the Ganges, and Kumaon extending northward to the summits of the Himalaya. Sugar, cotton, and tobacco are the principal products of Rohilkund. The city of Delhi, renowned both in Mahomedan history and in the mythological legends of the Hindoos, is now a huge collection of ruins; but the modern capital, constructed by Shah Jehan by its side, is a considerable town. Here dwells the "Grand Mogul," confined within the precincts of the district on a pension of a hundred thousand rupees a month, and haunting like a ghost the tombs of his ancestors. The city under the British rule is fast recovering from the rapid decline into which it had fallen, and from its situation adapting it for a great inland market for the interchange of the commodities of Bengal and the Upper Provinces, it is likely that it will once more assume an importance, although not, as formerly, a political one. It has but few advantages, however, except as an entrepot, the country surrounding the city being unproductive, and the river unnavigable during the dry season for any but small boats. The province, however, is generally fertile, the land being of good quality and watered by the streams of the Ganges and the Jumna with their numerous tributaries. The British province of Delhi, however, is naturally dry and arid, although, from its having been the seat of government under the native dominion, its former rulers in part remedied this defect by laying down

canals; and these having fallen into decay during the anarchy which attended the dissolution of the Mogul empire, the British government has restored and improved them at a great cost. Still the western portion of the territory is almost entirely destitute of water in the warm season, the inhabitants obtaining it with difficulty from wells nearly two hundred feet deep. The inhabitants of the province consist of a mixture of Hindoos and Mahomedans, with a large proportion of Sikhs in the north-western part. In the districts favourable for cultivation, the productions are principally wheat, barley, grain, rice, millet, and indigo.

On the south of the soubah of Delhi is that of Agra, with a soil well adapted for the cultivation of indigo, cotton, and sugar, considerable quantities of which are raised more especially in the Doab between the Ganges and the Jumna. The greater part of the territories of Sindia, containing in all about thirty-three thousand square miles, are comprehended within the province. The British treaty with this Mahratta chief was merely one of friendship and amity till recently modified by Lord Ellenborough. The Rajah of Bhurtpore acknowledges the supremacy of the Company in the manner of most of the Rajpoot chiefs. His country contains an area of two thousand square miles; and his people are a race of Jats, not the old Mahomedan peasantry of the Punjab but Hindoos of the Sudra caste, whose valiant defence of their capital in 1805 we have had occasion to notice. The principality of Alvar, or Macherry, a hilly and jungly district of between three and four thousand square miles, is usually called Mewat in Mahomedan history, a term of reproach signifying the predatory and ruffian habits of the people.

The small province of Oude lies to the eastward of

Agra and Delhi, and is level, well watered, and rich in natural resources, yielding grain, opium, sugar, and all the richest crops of India. In 1819, the hereditary vizier, the prince of Oude, threw off the mock obedience he had till then paid to the shadow of the Mogul, and with the concurrence of the British assumed the title of King. This dignity, however, is nearly as empty as his former vassalage, for the Company are not only lords paramount, but have the right of interference in the internal affairs of the kingdom—a right, it must be said, which they have never yet exercised with benefit to the people. The British portion of the country is the district of Gurruckpore, yielding, according to the treaty of cession, 1,350,000*l.* per annum. The territories reserved for the "King of the Age" occupy about twenty-four thousand square miles. The Mahomedan part of the population are tall and robust, and both they and the Hindoos are highly appreciated as soldiers for the British army, of which they form a considerable portion.

To the north of Oude is the independent native sovereignty of Nepaul, bounded by the Himalayas beyond, and on the south by the British provinces. It consists principally of ranges of hills, of various altitudes, having fertile valleys between them, in which, owing to their height above the sea, there is a great difference of climate and the productions of almost every country can be grown. There is an abundance of rain in the warm season; and owing to its beneficial effects grain is very plentiful. Almost every other vegetable can be raised here, but the principal productions are pineapples, oranges, peaches, grapes, pulse, mustard, madder, sugar, and ginger. The pastures feed a great number of cattle, and the mountains abound in mineral treasures, which, however, have never yet been properly explored.

The natives themselves obtain, in a rude manner, large quantities of iron, lead, zinc, copper, and small quantities of gold. The inhabitants consist of a variety of tribes speaking different languages, some of which would seem from the appearance of the people to be of a Tartar stock, while others are evidently Hindoo, the Ghoorka conquerors belonging to the latter.

On the south and east of Oude and Agra is the province of Allahabad, the soil of which is generally fertile; the country being divided into the exceedingly productive plains which lie along the Ganges and the Jumna, and the elevated table-lands towards the south-west, which are not of so good a quality. The flat country is well watered but sultry, while the hilly tract is of a much lower temperature, and the inhabitants more dependent upon the periodical rains and their deep wells for the means of irrigation. The exports are sugar, cotton, opium, indigo, cotton cloths, saltpetre, iron, and diamonds from the mines of Pannah. The population is very great, and bears the proportion of one Mahomedan to seven Hindoos. The rajahship of Rewah, within this province, contains between ten and eleven thousand square miles, for the most part an elevated table-land, and is connected with the British by a treaty establishing their supremacy, but giving them no right to interfere in the internal government of the state. This right, at least in flagrant cases, is insisted upon with the Bundela chiefs, whose rule extends over sixteen thousand square miles.

On the east of Allahabad is the province of Bahar, one of the most favoured by nature in Hindostan. Its climate is temperate, its soil fertile and well watered; and its situation for commerce is good, as being on the highway between Bengal and the Upper Provinces. These advantages made Bahar one of the most flourish-

ing provinces under the Hindoo rule, which position it retained during the Mogul empire; and its prosperity has latterly much increased owing to the peace it has enjoyed for three quarters of a century, as well as the other advantages of the British rule. Its trade, manufactures, and agriculture, are alike flourishing; and besides producing grain, sugar, and indigo, it yields large quantities of opium, which forms, with rosewater, saltpetre, oils, and cotton cloths, the principal staple of its trade. The inhabitants resemble the Bengalees in appearance, but are much more addicted to intoxicating drinks, and are less cleanly in their habits.

In geographical position Bengal, the next province on the east, is very happily situated, being every where protected by a strong boundary, and having the only port in that part of the country; while it commands the internal trade of Hindostan Proper as possessing the principal portion of the navigable part of the Ganges. It has also the advantage of being very productive, the soil being of a siliceous nature, and fertilized by the presence of different salts and decayed vegetable matter, and the whole province being well watered, both by streams and the inundations which take place during the rains owing to the flatness of country. Bengal produces almost every vegetable which we have mentioned as belonging to the other provinces in India, but its principal productions are rice and other grain, peas, beans, oil-seeds, cocoa-nuts, tobacco, sugar, indigo, cotton, the mulberry and the poppy. On an average each field has two harvests in the year, one of white corn and the other of pulse, oil-seed, or millet. Mangoes, dates, bassias, and a variety of fruits not to be found in Europe are here very plentiful. The manufactures of Bengal are almost confined to textile materials. The celebrated

muslins of Dacca, woven by the rude loom of the Hindoo, can scarcely be equalled in Europe even with the advantage of machinery; while the calicoes, canvass, blankets, chintzes, damask linen, silks, brocades, and mixed goods of silk and cotton, likewise attest the great progress made by the Bengalese in the art of weaving. The natives are a slightly made race, but possess much natural ingenuity and talent. They are principally engaged in agriculture, trade, and as boatmen in the numerous navigable streams. Of mechanics, with the exception of weavers, there are but few and still fewer who devote themselves entirely to their trade. The principal town in Bengal and the residence of the Governor-General of India is Calcutta, situated about a hundred miles from the sea on the Hooghly river, or that branch which forms the western side of the delta of the Ganges.

The northern boundaries of Bengal are the Nepaulese dominions, Sikkim with the sanatorium of Darjeeling on its frontier, and Bhotan. The last mentioned country much resembles Nepaul, although it is less fertile. Great varieties of fruits and vegetables are grown in the valleys, metals are found on the hills, while the forests abound with elephants whose teeth form a large staple of export. In addition to this there is a considerable trade in the precious metals. The inhabitants of Bhotan are Lama Buddhists, and are tall and hardy and of an independent and energetic disposition.

To the eastward of Bengal Proper, the British territory extends to the Munnipore country, and on the north-east comprehends the great valley of the Brahmapootra, or Upper Assam, to the gorges of the Himalaya. On the eastern side of the Bay of Bengal are the province of Chittagong, and that of Arracan conquered from the Burmese in the last war and now one of the most

flourishing portions of the British territory. These maritime districts are bounded on the east by the Burman Empire; while the Tenasserim Provinces, continuing the sea-board southward, abut upon Siam.

Returning westward, in order to follow the series of the Akberian soubahs, we find the province of Malwa, bounded on the north by Agra and Ajmere. Malwa is a large and extremely fertile territory consisting, in Malwa Proper, of an elevated table-land diversified with hills, having a temperate and equable climate, a very productive soil, and abundance of water. These advantages have kept it in a state of prosperity which was not disturbed even by the ravages of the Pindarees. The soil consists of a rich black loam or a ferruginous mould, and is capable of producing every plant grown within the limits of Hindostan. Wheat, grain, Indian corn, and several other grains are grown and exported, and the principal other productions are rice, sugar, indigo, ginger, turmeric, tilt, garlic, tobacco, cotton, and linseed, with grapes of a very superior quality. Opium and tobacco, however, are the productions for which Malwa obtains most celebrity, both being of the best quality to be obtained in Hindostan. The opium is much sought after by the Chinese, who declare that it contains two-sevenths more of the pure drug than the best brought from other parts of India. The population has the proportion of one Mahomedan to twenty-one Hindoos.

In this province is situated a portion of the territories of Sindia, including Oojein his ancient capital. It includes also the dominions of his former rival Holkar of Indore, which contain between four and five thousand square miles, and are reduced to complete dependence on the British; besides many other small Hindoo principalities and townships, and Bhopal, containing

about seven thousand square miles, a solitary Mussulman state composed of a Patan colony to which the territory was assigned by Aurungzebe.

The province of Guzerat lies to the west of Malwa, and is inhabited by a strange diversity of tribes, castes, and sects. Baroda the Gaekwar's territory, and Kattywar, protected by treaty from the internal interference of the British, though acknowledging their supremacy, occupy about twenty-five thousand square miles. The modern capital of the province is Surat on the Tapti, which was frequented by the earliest European adventurers in India, and where the English established a small factory in 1612.

Guzerat is separated from Cutch on the west by the gulf of that name. This latter province, which is mentioned in the institutes of Akbar as an independent state, contains between seven and eight thousand square miles, and although acknowledging the supremacy of the British, is still in other respects free. It is divided into two parts, the one consisting of an immense salt marsh called the Runn, and the other being a large island surrounded by the Runn and the sea. The marsh, which is lost in the sands of the Great Desert, dries up in the warm weather, and becomes covered with good pasture. The soil of Cutch consists principally of clay, and produces cotton in great abundance, but is so unproductive in grain that wheat is imported from Sinde, Guzerat, and Malabar in large quantities. The inhabitants are composed of nearly equal proportions of Hindoos and Mahomedans, and in their moral condition are said to be exceedingly debased. A part of the Hindoos, however, are enterprising and industrious merchants, employing a large number of coasting vessels; and the pilots and other mariners of Cutch are noted for their skill.

The Deccan or South was but little known to Akbar, and only imperfectly conquered by Aurungzebe. The word was applied by the Hindoos to the whole country, from the Nerbudda river in the north which intersects Malwa and Guzerat to Cape Comorin in the south; but the Moguls terminated the Deccan at the Krishna river, the boundary of their own conquests.

The most northern province of the territory is Gundwana, with Malwa and Allahabad on the north, but it is usually included with Berar, containing the dominions of the Nagpore rajah, an area of about fifty-seven thousand square miles. This state is entirely dependent on the British.

On the east of Berar is the fertile but now ruinous province of Candeish; and on the west Orissa, one of the early eastern acquisitions of the British, if that country can be said to have been acquired, when as yet it was but little explored. Extending southward along the sea coast are the Northern Circars, inhabited exclusively by Hindoos who, in spite of their hot and unhealthy climate, are noted for their manufactures. The country produces sugar, cotton, tobacco and teak-wood.

On the south of Candeish and Berar is the Mogul province of Aurungabad, so called in honour of Aurungzebe. It is mentioned in history also by the names of Ahmednuggur, and Dowletabad. The little rocky island of Bombay is contained in this province, which is now the seat of the western capital of British India. Barren and damp, and formerly so unhealthy that three years were considered the average duration of European life, the island would be worse than useless but for its commercial and maritime advantages. The rise of the tides is so great that docks have been constructed which supply numerous ships to the rest of the empire; and ma-

terials for them are obtained from the teak forests which cover the sides of the ghauts on the same coast. A portion of the province is occupied by the north-western part of the territories of the Nizam. The surface is in general mountainous, forming part of the table land of the Deccan, about one thousand eight hundred feet above the level of the sea, and affording those natural fortresses which enabled its native Mahrattas so frequently to baffle even the victorious Aurungzebe.

On the east is Beder, which is entirely comprehended in the Nizam's country, and is a hilly but not mountainous province, watered with numerous small streams.

Southward is Hyderabad, which gives its name to the Nizam's dominions, the total area of which is about ninety thousand square miles. The surface is a lofty table-land but not mountainous, the soil naturally productive, and the climate sufficiently temperate considering its latitude. Near the capital is the fortress of Golconda, the celebrated depot of diamonds.

To the west and south of Hyderabad is Bejapore, the western part of which, termed the Concan, slopes down from the ghauts to the sea. The rest is either an elevated table-land, or a mountainous country studded with those isolated rocks which nature herself seems to have intended for the fortresses of banditti. One of these is Sattara, the cradle of the Mahratta power, which a descendant of Sevajee is still permitted to inhabit, with a reserved territory of eight thousand square miles. At the southern extremity of the Concan are two Mahratta principalities, Kolapore, of upwards of three thousand square miles, and Sawunt Warree, of one thousand square miles, which appear to have been hardly ever otherwise than in a state of anarchy. The chiefs were robbers by land and pirates by sea, and remain to this day

the enemies of one another and of the public peace of the country. The British acquired a right by treaty to the internal control of Kolapore, but made no such stipulation with Sawunt Warree, although its capital and principal fortresses were captured in 1818. On the south of the latter state is Goa with its small district, the ruined capital of the departed empire of the Portuguese.

The Carnatic, on the east and south of Bejapore, contains the greater portion of the territory under the government of Madras. Its soil is in general of inferior quality; and on the east coast, and in the neighbourhood of Madras, is exceedingly sterile, from the large quantity of saline ingredients it contains. The climate is but little favourable to health, the temperature being higher towards the south than in any other part of India. The principal crops are rice and a small grain called raggy, productions such as require a rich soil being scarce. The inhabitants are mostly Hindoos, the Mahomedans being comparatively very few. In 1785 there were twenty thousand Roman Catholic Christians in the province.

Unlike Bombay, the British settlement of Madras has no natural advantages whatever. Placed on a low sandy coast, beaten by a tremendous and incessant surf, it has no port or protection for shipping of any kind; and the soil around is so poor, that without external supplies of food the garrison would perish. But it is the central presidency, and the seat of government for the south of India; and hence the city teems with population, and the manufactures of all the neighbouring provinces pour into its warehouses, whence they are dispensed to the world as Madras goods.

On the west of the Carnatic, and wholly surrounded by the British territory, is the large principality of Mysore,

where the descendants of the ancient Hindoo dynasty, overthrown by the usurper Hyder Ali, still possess a dominion, though in every respect subordinate to the British, containing about twenty-eight thousand square miles. Mysore consists of an elevated table land, enclosed between the eastern and western Ghauts. The climate is healthy and temperate, and to a degree not known elsewhere in the same latitude. The soil is good, but from want of skill in the agriculturists it is not turned to such good account as it might be. The principal crops are rice, a variety of small grain, sugar cane, castor beans, and opium. The inhabitants are well built, good looking people; and both Hindoos and Mahomedans are said to be less observant of the minor forms of their religion or caste than in other parts of India.

On the west of Mysore is the British province of Canara, between the Ghauts and the sea, with a rocky and uneven surface rendered productive by a moist climate. Its valleys produce abundance of rice, and the northern districts sugar, teak, sandal-wood, cinnamon, and other spices.

Malabar is a prolongation of this maritime country to Cape Comorin, although the name is frequently used to designate the whole western coast. Besides the usual productions of this part of India, it is noted for the pepper vine, which affords its principal export. The black pepper of Malabar is reckoned the best in the world. The British territory contains the town of Calicut, so frequently mentioned in describing the earlier intercourse of Europeans with India, as the capital of the Nair prince they called the Zamorin. Next to the British possessions, proceeding southward, is Cochin, a Hindoo principality of two thousand square miles, under

the control of the Madras presidency; and then comes the magnificent country of Travancore, containing between four and five thousand square miles, and exhibiting all the majesty as well as all the beauty of tropical scenery. It is still under its native Rajah, though bound by a treaty similar to that of Cochin. It is bounded on the east by the southern Carnatic, and terminates with Cape Comorin, overlooking the Indian ocean.

The principal foreign European settlements remaining in India are on the Coromandel coast, in the British province of the Carnatic. The French territory of Pondicherry, so famous in the Indian wars, composes in reality only about sixty-nine thousand acres, but its villages are so strangely intermixed with those of the English, that it is scattered over a space of nearly three times the extent. Farther south the French have the town and district of Carical; and on the opposite Malabar coast that of Mahé, with one or two almost deserted lodges (or factories where they enjoy the right to have the national flag flying) on the same side of the peninsula. The small town of Chandernagore in Bengal, and two or three unimportant lodges elsewhere, close the catalogue of a dominion which once disputed the sovereignty of India. In 1840 the total population of the French establishments did not greatly exceed one hundred and seventy thousand. The governor resides at Pondicherry.

The Danes, besides one or two factories elsewhere, have still the town and district of Tranquebar, in the southern Carnatic, adjoining the French district of Carical. They contain about fifteen square miles of territory, and two hundred and thirty thousand inhabitants.

It is only further necessary in this rapid sketch to mention the magnificent island of Ceylon, about a hun-

dred and fifty miles from Cape Comorin, and separated from the Coromandel coast by the gulf of Manaar. It is about two hundred and seventy miles long, by an average breadth of one hundred, thus covering an area of two thousand seven hundred square miles. It is distinguished by its mountainous chains, rising sometimes to the height of five thousand feet above the sea, intermixed with still loftier peaks. The climate is temperate as compared with that of India, and its siliceous soil produces excellent cinnamon, and has latterly been found well adapted for the coffee plant. These, together with the finer woods for cabinet-work, arrack distilled from the toddy of the cocoa-nut tree, elephants' teeth, and gems of various kinds, are its principal exports; while its imports are chiefly rice and cotton cloth. The native inhabitants are Candians occupying the interior, Cingalese, and Malabar.

In the first book of this volume we sketched the skeleton of India by tracing her mountain ridges; and the system of her great rivers will be found to be equally simple. The Indus, after it receives the waters of the Punjab, traverses Sinde in its whole length and falls into the Arabian Sea, thus forming, with the adjacent territory, the western boundary of Hindostan. The Ganges issuing from the Himalaya in the north-west, traverses towards the south the territory of Gurhwal, and enters the Indian plain at Hurdwan. Soon it begins to bend more and more decidedly towards the east, following pretty nearly the line of its parent Himalaya, and threading the provinces of Delhi, Agra, Oude, Allahabad, Bahar, and Bengal; while it receives on its way the waters of the Jumna, the Goggra, the Sone, the Gunduk, and a hundred smaller streams. When it enters Bengal it verges to the south, till mingling its immense volume

with that of the Brahmapootra, it plunges with it into the Bay of Bengal. Such are the western and northern lines; while the eastern is formed by the Brahmapootra, which traverses Assam and Bengal.

The Chambul rises in the Vindya range, flowing through the province of Malwa, till it joins the Jumna in the Doab. The Nerbudda has its source in Gundwana, near that of the Sone; and while the latter river traverses Allahabad to join the Ganges at a north-easterly point, the former runs west through Malwa and part of Guzerat, till it falls into the Gulf of Cambay, thus forming the northern boundary of Hindostan as contradistinguished from the Deccan.

This brings us into the region of the Ghauts, the western of which mountainous chains, or that on the Malabar side, is more elevated than the eastern, or Coromandel, while the table land between has the same inclination. The rivers, therefore, on the west coast of the Peninsula are inconsiderable streams, while on the east, however unimportant they may be for navigation, they plunge in considerable volume into the Bay of Bengal. Such is the course of the Godavery, and of the Krishna the southern boundary of the Mogul Deccan, both of which, rising in the one chain of Ghauts and traversing the whole breadth of the Peninsula, find their way through the gorges of the opposite chain into the Northern Circars and the sea. The Cavary, in like manner, farther south, rises in the Coorg country near the coast of Malabar, and after blessing Mysore above the Ghauts, and the Carnatic below, with its spreading waters, is lost in the Bay of Bengal. But these rivers are only useful in fertilizing the arid soil of the south. No vessel of any magnitude can enter beyond their embouchures. The natives dance over their eddies in wicker baskets covered with hides, similar to

the coracles used by the ancient Britons and still seen sometimes on our English Wye; or, with yet more savage ingenuity, they commit themselves to a raft of twigs floating on earthen pots.

Ceylon abounds with rivers, especially on the western side, which carry the waters of the mountainous districts into the sea.

British India occupies about six hundred and twenty-five thousand two hundred and fifty square miles, with a population of about ninety-five millions, distributed thus:—Bengal and Agra, including the heretofore Burmese provinces, with Assam, &c., three hundred and sixty-eight thousand two hundred and fifty square miles, and seventy million five hundred and eleven thousand souls; Madras, one hundred and thirty-one thousand square miles, and fifteen million souls; Bombay, seventy-six thousand square miles, and eight million five hundred thousand souls; and Sinde, fifty thousand square miles, and one million souls. The allied and tributary states, the most important of which we have specified above, have collectively about five hundred and sixty-six thousand square miles, and about forty-three million souls; and besides these, Lahore is supposed to comprise sixty thousand square miles, with a population of four millions; and Nepaul fifty-three thousand square miles, with a population of two millions.

CHAPTER II.

THE PRODUCTIONS, RESOURCES, AND CAPABILITIES OF INDIA.

If that country is to be reckoned fortunate which possesses within itself all things that are necessary for the sustentation of its inhabitants, India is the most fortunate in the world. But nature is never blind in her profusion; she always appears to retain in view the onward progress of the human race; and even while most bounteous in her gifts bestows them with a reservation, denominated by the thoughtless a caprice, which calls forth the intellectual in aid of the physical qualities of the people. With abundance of rice for their simple food, abundance of cotton for their simple clothing, and abundance of mud leaves and branches for their simple dwellings, the Hindoos were still poor. The occasional failure of their crops admonished them that something more was to be done, if they would not perish, than gather in their harvests and devour them; and the necessity

they were thus under of combination, and of the interchange of productions and of the different species of labour, led to new wants and new means of supply.

But here again they were fortunate; for their country, immense in its extent, various in its climates, and endlessly diversified in its hills and vales, mountains and forests, streams and rivers, answered all their demands. When cotton did not suffice for their wants or wishes, the juice of the mulberry tree was spun for them into silk by insects still more ingenious than themselves; and their sheep yielded warmer wool than that which the Greeks reported them to obtain from plants. They dyed their manufactures with a plant which the ancients called after them indicus, corrupted by the modern British into indico, and then indigo, and with lac, munjeet, and other substances. Salt they obtained for their rice from lakes, mines, encrusted earths, and the ocean; and sakkhar, called by the Europeans sucre, sugar, &c. from the date-palm, which they had in common with the Africans and the Northern Arabians, and from their own cane with which they enriched the West Indies and other parts of the world. Wheat and barley from the Tartarian regions were early acclimatized in Southern India. They received coffee from the early Arabians who brought it with them into Malabar. The tobacco, the Indian corn, the capsicum and the potato of the New World found with them a congenial home; and also the opium of Asia Minor and Europe. The bread-fruit tree of the South Sea Islands, three of which suffice for the support of a man during eight months of the year, is proved to be at their command; and the cocoa-palm, which produces cordage and thatch, food and oil, milk and toddy with bowls to contain them, grows spontaneously on their coasts. They share with the natives of the Eastern

Archipelago in their cloves, nutmegs, pepper, ginger, and other condiments; and the tea plant, so long supposed to be the peculiar characteristic of China, grows wild in the woods of eastern India and in Nepaul. Plants, trees, fruits, and flowers of almost all kinds, they either possess indigenously or have made their own; they have a climate and a soil for the productions of the east, the west, the north, the south; and their vast country might thus seem intended to become the garden of the world.

If the Indians are thus fortunate, it follows that they can only be otherwise from the abuse or neglect of the gifts of nature. We have seen what was their condition under the Hindoo and Mahomedan princes, and have been able to trace the causes of their misery and poverty in the midst of so many sources of happiness and wealth. In the fertility of the country, in its adaptation for all the productions that minister largely to the wants and wishes of the human race, and in the intelligence and industry of the people, surely we *ought* to read their fortune under a refined, enlightened, liberal, humane, and Christian government.

Cotton is not used in India merely for dress, but for carpets, curtains, beds, awnings, cushions, and padding of every description; and so independent are the people of other similar materials, that although possessing abundance of flax they never cultivated it for the fibre but merely for the seeds, from which they manufacture oil. The consumption of cotton, therefore, by a population of a hundred and fifty millions, must be enormous; and General Briggs appears to estimate it moderately at seven hundred and fifty million pounds a year, to which must be added, in order to find the whole produce of India, considerably more than a hundred million pounds for exportation.

The first importation which England received of this great staple was in 1789, and it came, not direct, but through Flanders and Denmark, to the extent of two million pounds. The Company now began to exert themselves, but it was fully ten years before Indian cotton became an article of any consideration in British commerce. Since then the importations have increased from a few million pounds to a hundred million pounds; and in 1819, including those into China, they amounted to a hundred and forty million pounds.

It is obvious that by far the greater part of the cotton grown in India must either be of a naturally inferior quality, or receive very little attention from the cultivators; since it is not to be supposed that a fine article would be used for such purposes as stuffing saddles, or for the coarse fabrics into which it is for the most part manufactured. But the finer goods so long imported by England, and only rejected for the sake of her own manufactures, prove that cotton of quite another quality was common in the country; while the famous muslins of Dacca have never been rivalled even by the productions of the English loom. In 1789 the resident of Dacca stated in a report, that the cotton used in these exquisite fabrics was peculiar to the district, that it was said no other answered the purpose, and that the Dacca plant when tried elsewhere invariably deteriorated. Dr. Roxburgh, on the other hand, relates that the most intelligent people of the country considered the difference to lie not so much in the article itself as in the spinning.

But without going into the extensive question of the difference of soils and species, we may observe, firstly, that India has been *proved* by many years' experience to manufacture from her own cotton fabrics good enough to be worn by the English, and fine enough to adorn the

fairest of their women; but secondly, that if even the short-stapled indigenous article alone were brought completely into our market it would make the fortune of the dependency, and render the mother country in a great measure independent of foreigners who are liable every day to become enemies. The efforts of the Company, which have been continued at intervals ever since 1788, have been as yet of comparatively little avail; partly because in introducing American plants the agents appear to have studied very little the adaptation of species to soils, but principally, we suspect, because the question is more intimately connected than any other of the kind with that of the general condition of the peasantry, who are almost all more or less cotton-growers and cotton-spinners. The best way to improve cotton is to elevate the social position of its cultivators, to enable them to adopt new modes of cleaning, and to give them roads to transport it cheaply to market. Our machinery almost utterly deprived them of a trade in cotton goods of their own manufacture, which amounted before 1814 to two millions sterling; and our Government, influenced by the eager cupidity of the manufacturers, instead of permitting the inevitable transition to be gradual, rendered it so sudden, by means of prohibitory imposts, as to fall like an avalanche on the people, crushing hearts and hopes, and reducing vast multitudes to hunger and despair. It is our duty, therefore, as well as our interest, to assist India in the production of the raw material which she has, and which we cannot do without. Perhaps it will be considered pertinent to this subject if we remark, that it is not in cotton alone the natives are deficient without the assistance of Europeans: even in Bengal, where they have the comparative advantage of the permanent settlement of the land tax, the indigo they produce, which is hardly a tenth part of the crop

is of the inferior mixed sorts, and their share of the raw silk although greater in quantity is of the same low quality.

It is usually supposed that sugar was originally derived by India from China, but we cannot find any solid grounds for this opinion. The brittle article of the consistence of salt, described by Dioscorides and Pliny as being found upon canes, refers in all probability to the sugar-candy of China rather than to the more imperfect crystallization of India; but the much earlier accounts of Theophrastus and others declaring it to be merely a vegetable honey obtained from reeds, or a sweet humour exuding from their leaves, may point to a sugar not so skilfully refined. At all events it was from India the rarity was received, which in Pliny's time was used only in medicine.

Till the early part of the seventeenth century, honey was almost the only substance used in Europe for the purposes of sweetening, but at that time sugar was seen in small quantities in the houses of the opulent, and towards the close of the century when tea and coffee began to be generally used it became an article of some importance in trade. In 1700 ten thousand tons were consumed in England, and this increased gradually to a hundred and eighty thousand tons, the quantity which barely suffices for the wants of the present day. In 1790 the Company received some samples of Indian sugars, with reports from their agents on the mode of cultivation and other particulars; and the importations which commenced in consequence amounted in 1822 to fourteen thousand tons. The prosperity of this branch of Indian commerce would have seriously affected the West Indies, had it not been purposely kept down by high differential duties; and thus the people of England were compelled

to pay for the upholding of a system of slavery which they were afterwards compelled to pay to get rid of. The introduction of the Otaheite or Bourbon cane, however, into the West Indies towards the close of the last century did still more for their protection than the partiality of the fiscal system; but this large and heavy cane has since been found completely adapted for cultivation in India, while she has likewise received a plant from China which is said to yield double the produce of the common Bengal cane.

The capabilities of India with regard to this article may be guessed at from what took place on a portion of the differential duties being removed,—we say a portion, for those on rum, which is manufactured from the refuse of the cane, were retained till a year or two ago. In 1834 the importations were, in round numbers, one hundred and one thousand hundredweights; in 1835, one hundred and thirty-eight thousand; in 1836, one hundred and seventy-eight thousand; in 1837, three hundred and three thousand; in 1838, four hundred and seventy-four thousand; in 1839, five hundred and eighty-seven thousand; in 1840, four hundred and ninety-nine thousand; and in 1841, twelve hundred and seventy-two thousand.

Indigo was an article of some importance even in the earliest commerce of the Company, but, like cotton, it was so carelessly prepared by the natives that its value was much impaired. In 1783 the resident English began to direct their attention to the subject, and by their capital and intelligence they soon established the most important business now carried on by Europeans in India. Till an earlier year in the same century indigo had been a persecuted, and in some countries a prohibited article, for it was of course necessary for the

"vested interests" of the growers of woad to be *protected*, and for the people, therefore, to be compelled to use an inferior and a dearer dye!

The natives carry on the manufacture without the expense of any building at all, the plant being steeped in jars in the open air; but even a European establishment consists only of some vats of masonry for that purpose, a boiling and drying house, and a dwelling for the planter. Although the fixed capital of the business, therefore, is only a trifle compared with that required for sugar, the extreme precariousness of the crop tries severely the resources of those engaged in it. A great export trade in this article, however, was formed almost at once; the natives, supposed to be so obstinate in their habits, gliding quickly into the course pointed out for them. Before the end of the century four million pounds were sent to Europe in a year; and although a temporary reaction took place in consequence of the suddenness of these operations, the quantity had increased by 1826 to nine million pounds, which has remained the average ever since. It is to be specially observed that in the earlier part of the trade India was almost completely ousted from the field by the West Indies and America, where Europeans had taken up the manufacture; but when the circumstances we have already mentioned had withdrawn this rivalry for a time, and Europeans turned their attention to it in the east, a species of monopoly was established there by the superior capabilities of India, which continues to this day, and will, in all probability, be strengthened rather than weakened by time.

Silk is another great staple of Indian foreign trade, but is also like cotton more useful in the clothing of the inhabitants than is commonly supposed. Besides the worms which yield the commercial investments, there are various

other species of less conventional value; and with the produce of such the poorer classes in Assam clothe themselves throughout the year, while the wealthier use them as winter-stuffs; and in Bengal and other parts of India a coarse and cheap but durable fabric has long been much esteemed for children's dresses, and is now becoming an article of importation into Europe for the covering of parasols and other purposes. The wild silkworms, as they are called, feed on a variety of plants, such as the jujube, peepul, castor-oil plant, laurel, &c., found in every forest in India; but the mulberry is always the food of the more valuable worms. The latter, it is probable, were originally derived from China, though silk, as a product of India, can be traced to the earliest times.

The Chinese silkworm, however, was given to Europe as well as to India, and hence the produce of the latter came into direct competition with that of the skilful mechanics of the west, and suffered accordingly. But when the Company, in 1770, introduced into their eastern territories the Italian method of winding, all difficulties vanished. The inferiority of Indian as compared with European silk consisted in the manipulation, and the trade of the Mediterranean countries began instantly to decline. In 1792 the quantity of raw silk imported from India into the United Kingdom was four hundred and one thousand four hundred and forty-five pounds, and in 1829 it had increased to one million three hundred and eighty-seven thousand seven hundred and fifty-four pounds. In the ten years ending with 1841 the average importation was one million six hundred and eleven thousand seven hundred and seventy-eight pounds. During the same period the importation of manufactured silk amounted to about four hundred thousand pieces annually, but of a quality inferior both to that of Europe

and China. The modern trade in raw silk, however, may be considered still in its infancy, for the culture of the mulberry, and the treatment and choice of worms in the various regions of India, are still matters of controversy. Its capabilities of expansion may be collected from the fact that during the above period we received nearly as much as we have mentioned from France, the produce chiefly of northern Italy; about five hundred thousand pounds in the year direct from Italy; and half that quantity from Holland and other countries collectively.

With respect to opium, the Indians are independent of European science, for the white poppy produces the drug spontaneously in the state fit for the market; and the only hindrance to the trade, therefore, is the miserable poverty of the people, which induces carelessness and tempts to adulteration. The culture, however, requires care, and a good soil, manure, and irrigation are indispensable; and all these have been bestowed by the Indians themselves upon a foreign plant raised almost exclusively for exportation. Opium was not early known as an article of commerce in India, but by the year 1786 the cultivation appears to have increased sufficiently to attract the attention of Lord Cornwallis to the drug as a means of producing revenue. In 1826 the Finance Committee estimated the gains derived by the Company from their monopoly at 1,000,000*l.* per annum; and at present, including the transit duties on Malwa opium, it may amount to a quarter more.

The *morality* of this trade, about which so much has been said, appears from all the inquiries we have been able to make to be pretty much upon a par with that of the trade in spirits. In southern China the people also consume alcohol to excess in its various menstrua, but the

attention of the wine-and-rum-drinking English was of course attracted only by the novel form of opium intoxication, and to the effects of this they attributed all the vice and degradation they witnessed. In the mean time, the cultivation of the drug in India is so far conducive to morality, that it affords a healthy and congenial occupation to the women and young children, who collect the juice every morning while the harvest lasts. The crop, however, like that of indigo, is very precarious:—"I have seen," says Mr. Langford Kennedy, in his evidence before the Select Committee of the House of Commons in March, 1832,—"I have seen the finest crops on the ground promising the most abundant produce, the country in fact covered like a sheet with the white flowers of the poppies, totally destroyed in the course of less than an hour by a hail storm, rendering it a matter of difficulty to tell what cultivation had been on the ground."

Tobacco, although only introduced in the reign of Akbar, is produced in immense quantities in India, where almost every person smokes; but only about fifty or sixty thousand pounds weight finds its way to England, out of twenty-two or twenty-three million pounds weight entered for home consumption. The proximate cause is the inferiority of the Indian article, but this again is owing to the attention of Europeans having been but little directed to the cultivation. In various parts of India excellent tobacco is produced, and especially in Guzerat, according to the evidence of Mr. Ritchie before the Committee of the House of Commons in 1831; although an experimental exportation did not pay in consequence of a defect in the curing. Dr. Royle, a first-rate authority on everything connected with the productions of India, and who made diligent inquiry into this subject in particular, is of opinion that nothing is wanted but care and skill to enable the Indian cultivators

to grow the best tobacco and obtain the best prices for it in the English market. The chief fault in the present mode of preparation, he tells us, is, that when cut it is exposed to the full effects of the sun and air and thus becomes dry and powdery; whereas in America "the greatest care is taken by effects of heating when heaped up, moisture, and afterwards by careful drying in the shade (that is, by the process of curing) to bring it to a soft, pliable state, of a brown colour, and with a honey smell." The importance of this question will be appreciated if it is recollected that, large as the quantity is which is entered for home consumption in Great Britain, it does not include one-half of what is actually consumed in Ireland, nor more than two-thirds of what is actually consumed in England,—the smuggler being presented with the rest of the profits by the fiscal generosity of Government.

The cultivation of tea in India is still in its infancy, although the actual importations of the Assam Company have proved beyond dispute that in that region it can be produced of a good and sound quality. Various parts of the Himalaya range, particularly the British provinces in the north-west, are likewise well adapted for the plant, and experiments are now in progress (originally suggested, we believe, by Dr. Royle), which, in union with the Assam operations, may result, in the language of a Committee of the House of Lords, in 1840, in "making an important addition to the commercial resources of India, and conferring a national benefit upon the consumers of tea in the United Kingdom."

India, including Ceylon, exports about twelve thousand tons of coffee, and this is within about a thousand tons of the entire consumption of Great Britain. Nearly two hundred thousand tons, however, are required for

the consumption of all the other importing countries collectively, and this quantity is chiefly supplied by South America and Java. There appears to be no good reason why India should not have a much larger share of the business. Wherever the plant has been fairly tried, whether in the Deccan or Bengal, it has succeeded to admiration; and perhaps the only real obstacles (now in part removed) have been short leases abroad and absurd and tyrannical differential duties at home.

Pepper was all along an important article (at first the most important article) in the Company's importations; and at present Great Britain receives from India seven or eight million pounds weight in the year, a great part of which she re-exports to other countries. The black pepper of Malabar is reckoned finer than that of the Archipelago. The other kinds, as the cayenne, produced from the capsicum, is imported in comparatively inconsiderable quantities.

The history of the trade in wool may be given in a word, but it is most interesting and important. The importations from India commenced only in 1833, when they amounted to between three and four thousand pounds weight; since which time they increased steadily and rapidly, till in 1842 they were at four millions and a quarter. The native sheep are described thus by Mr. Bischoff, in his History of the Woollen and Worsted Manufacture:—

"There are three descriptions of sheep in the north-western provinces of our territory; one, the common sheep of the plains of India, with a coarse fleece, and from which all the kumlees or coarse blankets are manufactured. One of these blankets, ten feet by five feet, sells for three shillings. This sheep does not thrive on the hills. The second description of sheep is that known in the moun-

tains by the name of Karoo, from which a very considerable profit is made from the wool, and the mountaineers supply all the northern provinces with the finer woollen cloths and blankets worn by the better orders of people. The next species is the Bhyangee, found in the Himalaya, on the Tartar side, and this animal is most valuable, not only from its magnificent fleece, but for the carriage of almost all our trade carried on through these mountains, where no other animal can climb save the goat, and in places the yäk. The weight carried by these beautiful sheep may be taken at an average of nine pounds, and the goods carried, viz., silk, salt, tobacco, opium (the finest in the world), drugs, tea, and wax, are put into small bags and laid on the back of the animal. The wool is most valuable in length, softness, and luxuriance; the meat of the sheep is excellent, and like venison."

It has been found by experiments that the wool of the Deccan is greatly improved by cross-breeding, and that Cape-bred merinos answer best for the purpose. The trade promises to become of immense importance, and more especially to Bombay. Great Britain at present consumes in her manufactures from forty to sixty million pounds weight of wool, of which one-half is received from Germany, although the vast plains of India are capable of feeding myriads of the finest sheep in the world.

A great variety of plants are used by the Hindoos for cordage, but sunn and jute, commonly called hemp by Europeans, though totally distinct from the true hemp plant, are the only exports for the purpose. Hemp, however, is a native of India, and grows wild in the north-western parts, and in the Himalaya; but is used solely for an intoxicating secretion called bang. The importation into England of sunn and jute was caused, as we have already related, by the difficulties

which occurred with regard to the supply of Russian hemp during the late war—difficulties which gave rise also to the use of iron cables; but although this new traffic ceased for some years when the Baltic trade was re-opened, the article had taken a certain hold of the market, and is now imported to the extent of about one hundred thousand hundred weights—a sixth part of the quantity derived from Russia. Flax, in like manner, is cultivated in India for its secretions, not for the fibre, the seed being crushed as in England for oil; but if treated differently there is no reason to suppose that it would not answer the purpose of thread. About two hundred bushels of the seed are imported annually (hardly a twentieth part of the aggregate importations); but, so far as we know, the fibre has not yet become an article of commerce.

Frequent attempts have been made by the Company to introduce the cochineal insect into India, but with no brilliant result as yet. The secretion of the lac insect, however, which likewise yields a red dye, is a considerable article of Indian commerce, and the resinous part is used extensively as a varnish, and in the manufacture of sealing wax and hats. From three to four thousand pounds weight of these substances are imported annually into England. India also furnishes a small portion of the madder root required for a somewhat similar dye.

The other articles of importation it may be unnecessary to do more than name; they are—ivory, hides and skins, cassia lignea, ginger, nutmegs and mace, cinnamon, cloves, gum arabic, wheat and flour, rice, safflower, sago, saltpetre, castor oil, senna, rhubarb and other medicines. Great Britain is almost wholly dependent upon India for the supply she requires—and this is large in war time—of saltpetre.

It would be an endless task to give an account of the natural forests of India, with their vast variety of woods both useful and ornamental. The teak on the coast of Malabar has already been mentioned as supplying materials for the ship-building yards of Bombay; but it is also found on the opposite coast of Coromandel and in other parts of the country, but more especially in Martaban on the eastern side of the Bay of Bengal. The bamboo appears to grow spontaneously almost everywhere within the tropics, and is used for other constructions, such as houses, bridges, boats, &c. It sometimes attains the thickness of two feet in circumference at the largest part, and from fifty to a hundred feet in height; a single knee of the plant being in this case sufficient to form a pail or bucket. Besides saul, sissoo, and other indigenous trees, mahogany is now common throughout India, although introduced only in 1795, and is very little inferior to the finest produce of Honduras. Maple, logwood, casuarina, oak, fir, holly, horse chestnut, with almost all the European fruit trees, succeed as well as in their native countries; and mango, cocoa nut, areca, sandal, cinnamon, and a host of others, yielding gums, dyes, and condiments, are either indigenous or very early acquisitions.

The natives are careless in the management of their forests; so much so that in some districts a deficiency in several of the woods in common use is already beginning to be felt; but there is likewise a national feeling among them, allied as usual to their religion, which studs the whole country with those shady groves that are so welcome to the fainting traveller. The present world of the Hindoo is indissolubly linked with the two worlds of the past and the future. His misfortunes in this life are the consequence of sins committed in a former state of

existence; and the actions of the good always bear reference to a life beyond the grave. His ostensible purpose in marrying is to obtain a son to present the funeral cakes; but if children should fail—if no human being should be left for the rites of the dead—his mango and tamarind trees are still living things that pour the dew of heaven as libations to his manes, and obtain for him the blessing of those that are ready to perish. To plant a grove is to a Hindoo what founding an hospital or building a church is to a European; but with this difference, that in the case of the former the duty is more commonly performed, and always from unworldly motives. When a European traveller, in passing through the country, pitches his tent every morning on the green sward of some delicious grove, eats at will of its fruit, and drinks of water from its wells of solid masonry, he is far from thinking of the beautiful and kindly feeling which many years ago, perhaps, had prepared these things for his refreshment and repose. A native, however, invariably repays the founder with a brief prayer, or at least a soft and grateful thought; and this is all the latter had mentally stipulated for with the unknown objects of his bounty. It was estimated by Colonel Sleeman in 1829, that in the district of Jubbulpore, in the valley of the Nerbudda, containing half a million inhabitants, there were three thousand of these groves of mango, tamarind, and other fine trees, interspersed with the banyan and the religious peepul; the cost of which must have been 120,000*l.*, or twice the annual rent of the whole of the lands. In the *same* district there were two thousand two hundred and eighty-eight tanks; one thousand seven hundred and sixty-nine wells, some with flights of steps, and all lined with brick and stone cemented with lime; three hundred and sixty Hindoo

temples; and twenty-two Mahomedan mosques. These were the works of private individuals; and they cost 866,604*l.*, or the whole annual rent of the lands for thirteen years.

"The southern part of the Indian peninsula, like Ceylon," says Dr. Royle, "is suited to the cultivation of cinnamon, cocoa, nutmeg, and other spices; and the coast of Malabar for pepper, cardamons, coffee, and teak. But they are not more so than are Bengal and the lower provinces of that presidency, for their rich cultivation of rice, indigo, and silk, with ginger, turmeric, long pepper, and betel leaf, luxuriant bamboos, bread-like plantains, ever useful cocoa nut, and slender areca. The northern provinces, having a less rich soil and drier climate, may boast of their wheat, barley, and potato culture, at one season of the year, with rice, sorghum, &c., at another; as well as their fitness, together with Malwa, Bundlecund, the West of India, and other parts of the peninsula, for the production of cotton, tobacco, and opium; while sugar, numerous oil seeds, and substitutes for hemp and flax, are produced in nearly every part. Almost every jungle is occupied by the lac insect and kino is yielded by the dhak (butea). The most barren hills afford olibanum, and the most arid looking plains will nourish the gum-secreting acacias, and the mouhwa or bassia, of which the flowers are fermented into a spirit, the seeds expressed for their oil, and the wood valued as excellent timber. Even in the western desert the lakes yield salt, and their shores are lined with plants which are burned for barilla. The mountains, though their bases are covered with a tropical and unhealthy jungle, abounding in valuable timber, have at certain elevations a delightful climate, and productions analogous to European countries. There we may soon

hope to see the tea plant a thriving culture, and the hemp turned to useful account. Also, though the cold and bleak tops of these mountains, and the plains on their northern face, appear barren and unproductive, their lakes abound with borax, and their valleys with vines; and we have in addition, spikenard and rhubarb from the vegetable, with musk from the animal kingdom."

Let us add that India is rich in mineral salts; that every year adds to the number of coal strata discovered; and that, besides deposits of other precious stones, there are diamond mines of considerable value both in the central and southern country.

Such a region, it needs hardly be said, teems with animal life in almost all its forms; but it is impossible to attempt here even the most meagre catalogue resumé. We have just hinted at those insects which the Hindoos set to spin clothing for them, and to secrete dyes wherewith to tint it; at the sheep which are robbed of their wool for a similar purpose; at the elephants destroyed in vast numbers every year, that their teeth may minister to the luxury of Europe; at the countless cattle that give up their hides for the shoes, saddles, &c., of distant nations; and at the smaller animals whose skins (thus distinguished from the former in commerce) are manufactured into gloves and other light articles. Isinglass is likewise obtained from their fish, together with sea-maws and other strange delicacies for the epicures of China. Salted provisions are as yet hardly known, and must remain so while the salt monopoly continues unmodified; but with the abundance of this mineral in various parts of the country, as well as the limitless quantity held in solution by the sea which washes so extensive a coast, the curing of provisions might easily become a great and profitable trade.

CHAPTER III.

INDIAN STEAM NAVIGATION EXTERNAL AND INLAND.

INDIA presents a striking illustration of the fact that although mankind in general may have a natural tendency onwards, yet communities comprehending whole nations stop, and even retrograde, when they are excluded from communication with other countries. Civilization may be compared to the sloth, which, the old naturalists tell us, devours the foliage of an isolated tree from the root upwards, but when it has arrived at the top, perishes from want of food.

Anything that adds to the speed and certainty of communication between distant countries must be felt upon the destinies of the human race; but the power of steam, though simple enough in its philosophical explanation, is nothing less than miraculous in its effects. And this new agent, it must be remarked, when employed in navigation, displaces no old one. It not only lives upon itself, but it affords food to others, and its establishment

has at the very outset the rare effect of enriching communities without impoverishing individuals. It does not encroach upon the trade of sailing vessels but adds to it; for it not only provides the commerce necessary for its own support, but creates a demand for productions it cannot itself supply.

The attention of many practical and enterprising men had long been turned to the establishment of this kind of communication with India, but it was only a small number of years ago that the project was taken up with the interest necessary for its rapid and successful progress. The first public step, we believe, was taken in 1823, when a meeting was convened at Calcutta, for the purpose of considering the subject; on which occasion seven thousand pounds sterling was raised by subscription as a bonus to the first steam vessel which should make the voyage from London for Calcutta within seventy-five days, and return within the same space. The first steam voyage was made by Captain Johnston in 1824-25 in the Enterprise of five hundred tons burthen and one hundred and twenty horse power. This vessel, however, the first steamer that rounded the Cape of Good Hope, made a very unsatisfactory voyage as she was not at all fitted for the purpose, and was unable to attain a higher average speed than six knots an hour.

In 1829, Mr. (now Lieutenant) Waghorn was employed by the Board of Control to carry out dispatches, and report on the possibility of establishing a regular communication by way of the Red Sea. The Enterprise was to meet him at Suez, but she was prevented from doing so by an accident, and this persevering and indefatigable individual prosecuted his voyage down the Red Sea in an open boat, and succeeded in fully proving the advantages of this route. In the same year the Hugh

Lindsay of four hundred and eleven tons and a hundred and sixty horse power, was built and occasionally employed in trips from Bombay to Suez, but she does not appear to have been well adapted for the service. In 1833, Mr. Waghorn, who may be esteemed the pioneer of the route, carried mails in person to India and back again, thus putting an end to all doubts of the practicability of the scheme. In the same year, the Euphrates route was tried but with little success; and the eyes of all men were now fixed upon the overland line through Egypt. In 1833-34, a new fund was raised in Calcutta, and a private vessel was dispatched during the south-west monsoon with the intention of proceeding to Suez by the way of Madras and Ceylon, but, owing either to accident or mismanagement, she was unsuccessful. In 1836-37, several attempts were made to establish an East India Navigation Company, but from its being opposed by the East India Company, as well as by many of the leading merchants, it was unsuccessful, even with the support of Lord William Bentinck. However, these attempts resulted in the Company constructing two new vessels, one of six hundred and sixteen tons and two hundred and ten horse power, and another of six hundred and sixty-four tons and two hundred and thirty horse power, and in a Committee of the House of Commons being appointed, though unfortunately its proceedings were cut short in consequence of the death of his late Majesty. A joint stock company, however, was set on foot, and the Indian public showed the strong interest they felt in the subject by subscriptions to a large amount. In 1838, a committee was appointed, at a public meeting held in London, to report on the practicability of a comprehensive steam communication with India *viâ* the Red Sea, and the report, which was

made at a meeting held on the 18th January 1839, stated, "that a monthly communication between England and the three Presidencies of India, could best be accomplished by a private association; that it would require six vessels of two thousand tons, the estimated annual expenditure for which was 250,000*l.*; and that the time occupied by the transit would be thirty-five days to Bombay, and forty-two to Calcutta from London." This report was adopted, and a resolution having been passed "that Messrs. T. A. Curtis, J. P. Larkins, Jas. Mackillop, and J. Bagshaw, be requested to take measures for forming a Board of Direction, and preparing a prospectus to carry out the proposed company," these gentlemen accordingly entered into correspondence with Government and the East India Company, the result of which was, that the former promised to support the intended company by a grant of 50,000*l.* per annum for the Indian line. The opposition of the Company, however, was not yet disarmed, and after a tedious delay of nine months the project fell to the ground. This negotiation had the good effect of directing the attention of the Company to the state of their navy, and soon after they built several war steamers, and established steamboats on the Indus and the Persian Gulf. Their packet vessels, however, were still so small, and possessed so few accommodations for carrying passengers—an inconvenience which was increased by their being now on a war establishment, and frequently almost wholly taken up with military supplies for the new station at Aden—that they proved to be of very little use even to the inhabitants of Bombay; while, from the communication not being extended to Madras and Calcutta, these Presidencies derived no direct benefit at all from the establishment of steam navigation, inefficient as it was. Owing to this

latter circumstance a meeting was held at Calcutta, and 130,000*l.* subscribed towards a comprehensive company for steam communication between England and the ports of Calcutta, Madras, and Ceylon. In October 1839, the gentlemen we have mentioned above as having been authorized by a meeting in London to form a board of direction, and prepare a prospectus of the proposed company, determined at length upon taking these steps without the *certainty* of the co-operation of the East India Company. Now, however, there arose a contention among the friends of steam communication themselves, which bade fair to do more harm than all the opposition it had encountered.

Impatient of the delay which must take place if further negotiations with the East India Company were to be carried on, it was proposed to the subscribers of the Comprehensive Company in Bengal to establish a single vessel to run between Calcutta and Suez as a "precursor" of a more extended communication, and a difference of opinion upon this point ripened into a contest in which the two sides, under the name of Comprehensives and Precursors, resembled two warring factions.

It is not our province to go into the merits of the altercation, but the very noise of the disputants had the effect of rousing the attention of the public, and thus wrought for good. In the mean time, a number of merchants and others in England connected with India, among whom were some of the directors of the Comprehensive Company, resolved on despatching a vessel entirely on their own responsibility, and, accordingly, on the 8th October, the India sailed from Plymouth. She was a beautiful vessel of twelve hundred tons and nearly four hundred horse power, with a flush deck one hundred and eighty feet in length and forty in breadth, and splendidly fitted up.

During this time the mail was conveyed regularly between London and Bombay, being carried, in the first instance, to Alexandria in two splendid vessels, both above fifteen hundred tons and four hundred and fifty horse power, belonging to the Peninsular and Oriental Company, and on the other side down the Red Sea to Bombay by vessels belonging to the East India Company.

At length, after the labours and the continual disappointments of twenty years, the advocates of a complete and comprehensive communication with India had a prospect of having their views carried out by the junction of the Comprehensive or East Indian Steam Navigation Company and the Peninsular and Oriental Company in April, 1841. The East India Company now agreed to grant 20,000*l.* per annum for five years in support of the undertaking, such grant to form an item in any contract the Company might afterwards give to the united company. Negotiations were at the same time entered into with the object of including the Precursors, or Eastern Steam Navigation Company, in this arrangement, but they were unsuccessful at the time, and the ultimate arrangement made with that company, in the latter part of 1844, was for the purchase of their vessel, the Precursor, for 50,000*l.*

The beneficial consequences of this junction soon showed themselves in the almost immediate establishment of a comprehensive communication with the three Presidencies of India, the Indian Archipelago, and China. The new arrangements, which were first carried into effect in January 1845, provided for a bi-monthly transmission of mails between England and India on the following plan. The mail which leaves London on the 3rd, *viâ* Southampton, commonly called the Bombay

mail, is taken to Alexandria by the Peninsular and Oriental Company's steam vessels, and from Suez to Bombay by those of the East India Company. Letters are also despatched *viâ* France, on the 7th of the month at the expense of the Government, whose steamers carry them from Marseilles to Malta, at which latter place they overtake the Southampton mail of the 3rd. Letters are only forwarded by these opportunities, however, when superscribed "*viâ* Bombay," as when no such direction is made, they are kept till the departure of the steamer which leaves Southampton on the 20th, commonly called the Calcutta mail. This is also in the hands of the Peninsular and Oriental Company, by whom it is conveyed, as before, to Suez, and thence to Madras and Calcutta, leaving at Ceylon mails for China and the intermediate places. This mail is likewise overtaken at Malta by the letters which left England *viâ* Marseilles four days later, and a similar rule exists with regard to the superscription of the letters, which must be marked "*viâ* Ceylon," or "Madras," otherwise they would not be despatched from the Post-office till the 3rd or 7th of the following month.

The Peninsular and Oriental Company have obtained contracts for the conveyance of the two monthly mails in the above manner under which they receive 115,000*l.* per annum for the service between Calcutta and Suez, and 45,000*l.* for the service between China and Ceylon. The line between Calcutta and Suez, consists of three steam vessels of five hundred horse power with one of two hundred and fifty horse power as a reserve. The time allowed when the ordinary route is pursued is five hundred and twenty three hours out, and five hundred and forty-three hours back again, to which one hundred and twenty hours are added during May, June and July.

This is exclusive of stoppages, which, in addition to the necessary delays for taking in fuel, &c. are to be at the option of the Admiralty agent on board. No stoppage, however, for public purposes, is to exceed one hundred and twenty hours. The mail between China and Ceylon is carried in two steamers of four hundred horse power with a reserve vessel of two hundred and fifty horse power. The time to be taken is three hundred and fifty hours, exclusive of stoppages. For all unnecessary delays, a fine is to be paid by the Company, and 35,000*l.* as the damages in case of a breach of contract.

These details of arrangements which may receive frequent modifications from time and circumstances, would perhaps be out of place in a work like this, did they not exhibit in a remarkable light the concurrence of the whole nation in working out a plan for bringing this distant dependancy so completely within the circle of our interests and sympathies. We consider the steam communication with India as at this moment existing to afford one of the most extraordinary illustrations of the greatness of Great Britain.

Before the overland route was opened no part of India could be reached from England in less than four months. Since then the passage has been made in one-fourth part of the time; and it is expected that when the railway line on the Continent becomes more complete, this will be reduced to twenty-five days or even less.

But great improvement may likewise be expected in the passage round the Cape, with which, so far at least as the conveyance of goods is concerned, the overland route will not interfere—unless it should be found possible to carry into effect the project for connecting the Mediterranean and the Red Sea by a canal. Already it is proposed to employ steam as an auxiliary in vessels direct

from England to India, and the voyage to Calcutta is calculated to occupy only from sixty-one to sixty-five days exclusive of stoppages. It is difficult indeed to imagine what may be the eventual speed attained in the passage round the Cape; but, setting aside the progress of improvements in the mechanical part of navigation, we appear at this moment to be on the eve of great changes in the theory by which the course of a ship is directed over the pathless waters of the ocean. The sun indeed still retains his place in the heavens; the attraction of the magnet continues the same; and the rocks, banks, islands, and other fixed points of direction, are as stationary as ever; but in addition to these guides, modern science has discovered that the wind, instead of blowing where it listeth, is governed in its career by determinate laws, and the skilful mariner is able to predicate its course, duration, and violence, and steer accordingly. Mr. Redfield, in his "Rotatory Theory of Storms," was the first to invade those terrible mysteries of nature to which so many human lives have been sacrificed; and Mr. Thom, in a recent work, has confirmed and systematised that writer's discoveries, and shown upon clear evidence the laws that govern the tempests in the Indian Ocean.

The regularity of at least the course of the hurricanes is proved by the different fortune which attends an outward and an inward bound ship. In the latter case a vessel sails for weeks along a track in which she may overtake or be overtaken by, or keep company with, a hurricane running along its regular path; while the outward bound, by steering a course at right angles with the destructive torrent, either escapes it altogether, or passes through the body of the danger in a few hours.

The hurricanes of the South Indian Ocean, it appears,

only occur at a certain season, embracing the four hottest months of that hemisphere. At this period the westerly monsoon prevails between the equator and latitude ten or twelve degrees south, in the track occupied by the south-east trade-wind during the rest of the year. Between these two contrary currents of the atmosphere the centres of revolving storms are not only first discovered, but actually move onward in the same relative position for a great part of their course. A curious and interesting circumstance, and one which must have given rise to the loss of many a gallant ship, is that in the centre of one of these revolving tempests there is a deathlike calm, occupying a space of fifteen or twenty miles in diameter. Let us add that, independently of the warning a mariner receives from the season of the year, and from having entered the region then haunted by storms, there are connected with the new theory numerous tests derived from the state of the barometer and other circumstances which indicate the approach of danger.

The steam navigation of India herself is confined to the rivers, with the exception of a vessel belonging to a private company which plies between Calcutta and Singapore, conveying letters between the former place and China. There are also several steamboats established on the Tigris, the Euphrates, and the Persian Gulf, for the purpose of conveying the mails by that route should any impediment be offered to the passage through Egypt, as well as to protect our interests in that quarter. The internal navigation of India is owing, like many of the other advantages the country has derived from British rule, to the measures of Lord William Bentinck, who placed the first line of iron tugs upon the Ganges in 1836. The first voyages produced the

Government a clear profit of forty per cent., and so much did the demand for this method of transporting goods exceed the supply, that in 1838, when the freight was put up to auction, it realized 23*l.* per ton. This great success as a mercantile speculation aroused the enterprize of the capitalists in England, and accordingly steps were taken to form a joint-stock company in London "for navigating the rivers in the East Indies by steamboats," and sixty-four of the most respectable firms connected with India in London, thirty-four in Liverpool, and twenty-two in Manchester, signed a resolution declaring that "the establishment of a regular inland navigation by steamboats on the Ganges and other principal rivers in India has a direct tendency to strengthen the British possessions in India, and at the same time to facilitate and extend commercial intercourse, and, consequently, to enlarge commercial prosperity generally in the East." This scheme, however, did not succeed; dissensions and misunderstandings arose among the projectors, and Lord William Bentinck, who had then returned from India, retired in disgust from the association, along with most of the members of any standing.

The navigation of the Ganges is at present in the hands of the East India Company, with the exception of the vessels belonging to the Steam-Tug Association and steam ferry-boats. The Company's boats are large handsome vessels, with good accommodations for passengers, but they are as yet few in number, and the passage-money and freight are too high. There are also steamboats on the Brahmapootra, belonging to the Assam Company, and a small flotilla on the Indus of flat-bottomed boats, by means of which troops can be conveyed in a few days from Bombay to the countries on

the north-western boundary. One of these, a vessel of one hundred and thirty feet in length, sailed on one occasion from the sea to beyond Loodianah on the Sutlege, a distance of more than a thousand miles. The whole of this steam flotilla reflects great credit on the East India Company, and has proved itself to be of much utility.

CHAPTER IV.

REVIEW OF THE CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE UNDER HINDOO, MAHOMEDAN, AND BRITISH RULE.

In the general idea we have attempted to give of India in the foregoing pages it has been more our wish to suggest than dogmatise, — to furnish materials for thought than to parade reflections. It may be permitted to us, however, before taking leave of this portion of the extensive subject before us, to enquire at least what are the obvious and necessary results of the sequence of facts we have communicated, and thus to conjecture what may be the Future of a great country from analogies drawn from the Past and the Present.

The difficulty of the task arises chiefly from the proneness to extravagance which seems inherent in human nature. The observers of India have sometimes looked through a magnifying telescope and have been amazed both by her moral and physical grandeur, and sometimes they have turned the opposite end and seen

everything mean and contemptible. Few have beheld her in her natural proportions; and thus in order to arrive at the truth it is frequently necessary to correct one error by another, and obtain light from the collision of opposite opinions.

The early ages of Hindoo history present a boundless field for the imagination, but few landmarks for the judgment. Some have seen through the shadows of time a mighty nation grown old in refinement while the rest of the world was still young; they have traced the decline of its antique and simple philosophy through the gradual impingements of luxury and corruption; and they have invested even the dark ages of its fall with all the splendour of chivalry and romance. Others again can shape nothing more out of the clouds of the past than a countless throng of human beings, inhabiting for ages one of the finest countries of the world, without advancement, without decline, but remaining fixed in that early stage of social progress which is just beyond barbarism. Their political union, say they, was weak merely in proportion to their ignorance, and it crumbled away instantaneously at the approach of a people more civilised than themselves.

The truth, it is to be presumed, lies between these two extremes. A small community, however barbarous, may be reduced to the appearance of order by the energy of a chief more advanced than the mass of his followers; but the existence in a vast and populous country of uniformity in social manners and political institutions, preserved not only by ancestral tradition but written laws, must imply a state of civilization complete in itself, however incongruous with the ideas of the observer. The peculiarity is that in India the kind of civilization was neither progressive as in Europe, nor permanent as

it has been the fashion to represent that of Asia. Long before the approach of the nations of the west it was already in a state of retrogression. The religion, such as it was, had been corrupted; the philosophy was almost lost; the literature was debased; the very language which contained everything valuable in religion, philosophy, literature, was nearly forgotten. There was no principle of political cohesion among the states, or of social cohesion among the people. The former were torn asunder by seditions and cabals, the latter divided even in their human sympathies by the antagonism of caste; and thus the invaders found little difficulty but from the vastness of the inert mass they had to penetrate.

The Hindoos were subdued by an Asiatic people like themselves, as ignorant of the treasures of modern science and as little susceptible of the refinements of progressive civilization. The Mussulmans did not retard their decline but accelerate it. They did not even attempt to introduce any moral change, except by the proselytism of the sword. They abrogated their civil law, indeed, for that of the Koran, but only in order to protect the supposed rights of the faithful in the property of idolaters; while in everything relating to crime they left them without scruple to the absurdities and atrocities of an almost unfathomable antiquity. They interfered with no custom, however detestable, that did not injure themselves. They added to the existing causes of slavery. They suffered the hellish fires of the sati to blaze as before to heaven. They listened without a frown to the cry of infant murder. They doubled the exactions of the native princes, demanding from the cultivator ONE-HALF of the produce of the land, and thus planted their foot upon the necks of the entire people, keeping them down

to the level of the dust, in hopeless poverty, degradation, and despair.

When the British came in—or were forced in by circumstances—amidst the wrecks of the Mahomedan empire, they set out upon no theory of government good or bad. They found themselves a handful of strangers in the midst of a mighty population, and everything was obliged to give way to the necessity of self-preservation. They were anxious to conciliate, and willing to respect rights wherever they found or imagined they found them. They would deal with the people according to their own laws, and employed both Mahomedan and Hindoo doctors to expound them. They were afraid of the name of conquerors, and were satisfied for a time with that of agents.

But the rights they represented, it must be confessed, were principally those of the traitorous servants of the Mogul, whom they could hardly bring themselves to subdue. Even when it was necessary to chastise and weaken them, they as frequently as possible left them the pomp and insignia of sovereignty, and, above all things, guaranteed to them by treaty the power of tyrannising over the people at will. Before this powerful aid there was a certain force in public opinion which kept the native princes within bounds, but an alliance with the English destroyed the balance and left the people without hope. Hence the sudden convulsions in some native states, the chronic disturbances in others, and the social retrogression of the inhabitants in all. There are few territories in India—perhaps not one—where the great mass of the people would not delightedly exchange the tyranny of their own chiefs for the regular and impartial rule of the British; but the jealousies of parliament, and the outcries of the nation at home, still

retard the progress of events inevitable in themselves, and deny yet a while to the country the prosperity it has a right to expect at the hands of the nation which has thought fit to constitute itself the mistress of India. It is worthy of remark that hardly one of the individuals in whose favour the interests of fifty million human beings are thus sacrificed has a better or earlier right to the dominion of the country than the British themselves. Nay, the curious thing is that the few ancient dynasties which still exist are mere empty pageants, while to recent usurpations are accorded more or less of the realities of power. In illustration of these remarks it will be sufficient merely to mention the name of the Mogul himself —of the shadow-like Prince of Mysore, set up instead of the substance of Hyder Ali and his family—of the Rajah of Sattara, the successor of the heretofore kings of the Mahrattas; and those of Sindia, Holkar, the Oude monarch, the deposed Ameers of Scinde, the misrulers of the Punjaub, and most of the chiefs of Rajahstan.

With all this delicacy, however, in assuming the true rights of the Mahomedan rulers whom they succeeded, they imitated them from the first in one all-important point: they demanded from the cultivators one-half of the produce of the land, and thus neutralized to a certain extent the unquestionable justice, moderation, and benevolence of their sway in other respects. We say only to a certain extent, for it cannot be denied that if a peasant is able to cultivate more of the soil under their equitable rule, or sell his produce for a higher price, he benefits in proportion; but the grand evil of so enormous an exaction is its dispiriting influence, and its confining the energies of its victims to the acquisition of means for the bare sustentation of animal life. What it takes to sustain life in India may be collected from Colonel Munro's

statement in 1813, of the earnings of the agricultural classes in the Ceded Districts containing two million inhabitants. The average annual expense of each individual for lodging, clothing, food, &c. he gives at 2*l.* for the first class comprising one-fourth of the population; 1*l.* 7*s.* for the second class, or one-half of the population; and 18*s.* for the third class, the remaining fourth.

This exaction, however, continued and legitimatised by the English, was rendered still harder to bear by the dishonesty of the natives they were compelled to employ in collecting it, and in preserving the peace of the country. The new rulers—a few thousands among scores of millions, and ignorant of the people, their usages, and their language—were completely in the hands of their own servants; and the different kinds of fraud and villainy perpetrated by the latter in the name of their masters would take some pages even to catalogue. The records of the India House are crowded with such cases; and although there can be no question that the most anxious and honourable efforts were made by the Company to remedy the evils of the system, it was only by very slow degrees that they have been even partially successful. Indeed for a considerable time the chief difference between the Christian and Mahomedan rulers, appears to have been the greater respect of the former for human life. In the middle of the seventeenth century a little circumstance occurred, recorded by John Mandelslo, which places this in a very clear light. The governor of Ahmedabad, it seems, (the Mahomedan capital of Guzerat) while giving an entertainment to the principal directors of the English and Dutch trade, sent for a fresh set of dancing girls, the first set having danced themselves out. The girls refused to comply, and when brought forcibly into his presence, mentioned

as a reason for their contumacy something which we need not repeat. "He," (the governor) continues the traveller, "laughed at it, but immediately commanded out a party of his guard and ordered their heads to be struck off. They begged their lives with horrid cries and lamentations; but he would be obeyed, and caused the execution to be done in the room before all the company—not one of the lords then present daring to make the least intercession for those wretches, who were eight in number. The strangers were startled at the horror of the spectacle and inhumanity of the action; which the governor taking notice of fell a-laughing and asked them what they were so much startled at."

To overturn a regime like this was something; but it must not be supposed that the first specimens of the British in India were themselves models of virtue. Another traveller who writes about the same time, gives an account of a youth (the brother of an English baron) who was in the train of Sir Thomas Roe, and whose conduct wanted only a touch of oriental sublimity to rival that of the governor of Ahmedabad. This "hot-brains," as our author calls him, having desired the servant of a native prince to hold his horse, was so irritated by the man's refusal that he horsewhipped him on the spot. "But this stranger (being whipt as before) came up and complained to me; but to make him amends, that frantic young man (mad with rage, and he knew not wherefore) presently followed him, and being come up close to him, discharged his pistol laden with a brace of bullets directly at his body, which bullets, by the special guidance of the hand of God, so flew, that they did the poor man no great hurt; only one of them first tearing his coat, bruised all the knuckles of his left hand, and the other brake his bow which he carried in the same hand. We

presently disarmed our young bedlam, till he might return again to his wits."

Before the time of Clive the English appear to have been for the most part reckless adventurers, greedy, debauched, and profane; and it was long after ere the taint was entirely eradicated from their character. Indeed the miserable salaries given by the Company afforded them hardly an alternative between dishonour and destitution after the trading system we have described in a former chapter was abolished. In 1796, Mr. Shore's salary as a writer was eight rupees a month; and that of Sir Thomas Munro, in 1780, five pagodas a month with free quarters, or ten pagodas finding his own lodgings. This left the latter gentleman one pagoda for food and clothing. Mr. Forbes, who arrived a few years after Mr. Shore, was frequently compelled to go to bed at sunset because he could not afford himself a candle or a supper. Munro complains that he was three years in India before he was master of any other pillow than a book or a cartridge pouch, and that his bed was merely a piece of canvass stretched on four cross sticks, with his great coat for a blanket. At this time civilians were allowed to trade, but the privilege was hardly worth having. How then were fortunes sometimes made as large as when the whole traffic of the country was in the hands of the English by the remission of the duties in their favour and in theirs alone? Shore explains the mystery by telling us what he did *not* do. In a single mission to Dacca his scruples prevented him from pocketing 100,000*l.*; and at a subsequent period he refused five lakhs of rupees and eight thousand gold mohurs offered to him as a bribe by the Nabob of Lucknow. We may readily conceive what chance the mass of the natives had of protection, or what opinion they were led

to form of the European character, under such circumstances.

The extreme apathy of the English with regard to religion was another great cause of the dislike and distrust of the natives. The Hindoos are sedulously attentive to all the forms of their superstition; the Mahomedans are religious bigots; the Parsees watch their sacred fire with unceasing attention; the Roman Catholics have exhibited at all periods of intercourse with the East a devout regard to the ceremonial part of their faith, and frequently a heroical devotion to its duties. The English alone were cold and indifferent. Some were infidels, some scoffers, even the best lukewarm. They had no churches, almost no priests; family worship was unknown; and Forbes must have had much awkwardness in answering the simple question frequently put to him by the wondering Hindoos—"Master, when an Englishman dies, does he think he shall go to his God?"

The drunkenness of the English seemed as bad to the Hindoos as their irreligion; and it was long before they became reconciled to it even among the lower classes. At the present day the Sepoys forgive it in their European comrades, and gravely and carefully carry them home from a debauch; but at an earlier period the natives must have been shocked and disgusted by this ungentlemanly habit when exhibited even by the chief functionaries of the government. It was the custom to drink mulled wine in the morning and arrack punch at all hours of the day and night; and when a man sent for his friends to ascertain their opinion of a new stock of claret, it was not uncommon for them to like it so well as to consume the whole chest at a sitting.

As for sexual immoralities, those of the English could

hardly have been reckoned such by the natives; although it is unfortunate that there was not even one vice from the stigma of which the Europeans could claim exemption. Neither Hindoos nor Mahomedans had any conventional limit to their debauchery. The harem of Akbar contained five thousand women, each of whom had a separate room; and as many hundreds were reckoned not an immoderate luxury for a great noble. When the latter, however, went very far beyond this number he encroached upon the privilege of royalty; and a Rajpoot viceroy offended the emperor Shere so much by his audacity in keeping two thousand concubines and dancing girls that he marched an army against the delinquent, and twelve thousand men fell in the quarrel.

Compared with such gigantic "irregularities," those of the English must have seemed mere peccadillos; but it is certain that this kind of vice survived the decline of drunkenness, and may be considered to have been in its zenith in those earlier years of the present century, when the increase of churches and chaplains appeared to give promise of a better regime. The fault is blamed upon the paucity of European ladies, only two hundred and fifty of whom are said to have been in India in 1810; but fourteen years before, Tennant tells us the marriage market was overstocked, and numbers of disconsolate adventuresses were compelled to return home alone. This would seem to transfer the blame from the paucity of women to the scantiness of the means of marriage; for the time of which he writes is that interval of poverty between the period when trade free of duty was abolished and that at which sufficing salaries commenced. At all events, in 1840 the extension of zemanas among Europeans, and the increase of half-caste children, were

reckoned accumulating evils by Lord Valencia; and in 1810, Captain Williamson, in a vade mecum for cadets, dedicated to the Court of Directors, gives minute directions for keeping native mistresses, and tells with great gout an anecdote of an elderly gentleman who, on being asked by a friend how he managed with his *sixteen*, replied, "Oh, I give them a little rice, and let them run about!"

Before the close of the last century drunkenness went out of fashion, and was followed slowly and gradually by irreligion and profligacy. In an article in the Calcutta Review, in which some interesting particulars are given of the early manners of the English in India, the commencement of the change is attributed to Lord Cornwallis; but we are inclined to look upon this social revolution merely as a necessary consequence of the one which had already taken place in the mother country. The Anglo-Indians are not foreigners, but well educated Englishmen, who go out in early youth with fresh family feelings, and in all the gloss of that modern refinement which is said, from one age to another, to adorn the paragon of virtue knowledge and cleverness called the Rising Generation. By Lord Cornwallis's time their papas and mammas had been drilled for a quarter of a century into the cold and decent respectability of the third George; it was thought decorous to patronise the church and multiply the clergy; men did not make a merit of sin, but wore a sober cloak over the rags of their unrighteousness; and they brought up their children as well as they could under the new regime. The Company being part and parcel of the people, shared of course in the change, and evinced the fact in their choice both of men and measures. The grosser evil of the trading system had already been put down; but they now no

longer allowed their servants to scramble for a subsistence, and their virtue to take its chance in the country of rupees, arrack punch, and dusky beauties. The fixed income with which they repaid their services preserved the respectability they had carried out with them from England. It brought them European wives—no longer adventuresses, but women of honour and character; and these in due time brought them a generation of daughters to refine and purify the whole mass. "*Sine Cerere et Baccho friget Venus*," is a faithful saying; for there is nothing more encouraging to virtuous love, let the romancers say what they will, than a good salary and a secure retiring fund. The native mistresses, as we have seen, made a stand for a time, but they gradually retired from the field, and the comparatively small number that remained in their broken ranks betook themselves to holes and corners; arrack punch descended to the common soldiers; Christianity came into fashion; dishonesty was voted ungentlemanly, if not wicked; and the English in India became astonishingly like the upper classes of those at home.

It was impossible for this change to take place without benefit to the natives; but another European revolution occurred to add to their good fortune. The battle of Waterloo reopened the continent to the English, who for an entire generation had been cooped up in their own little island, chewing the cud of their prejudices, and growing illiberal even in their liberalism. The "shopkeepers," as Napoleon called them, became gradually less stiff and intolerant. They discovered that the manners of foreign nations were not mere impertinent or ludicrous deviations from their own, at which it was necessary either to laugh or be indignant. In India they saw neither barbarism nor a poetical and visionary

refinement, but merely a kind of civilization necessarily different from theirs, since it was the growth of circumstances of which they were ignorant, in an antiquity too remote for examination. Under this strange and unworldlike garb they detected just such human nature as their own.

Having elsewhere touched briefly upon the measures that are in course of adoption for the improvement of the social condition of the natives of India, we must now allude as briefly to their moral position and prospects.

There can be no more permanence in the Hindoo religion than in the Hindoo manners, because the one is a portion of the other; and in point of fact pure brahminism has already ceased to exist among the educated classes. Their religion is patriotism, or rather the vanity of country. Shaken to its centre by sect after sect, the Hindoo faith is nothing more than a ruin; but this ruin—known to be such, and seen in all its bareness and fragility—is the last rallying point of the nation. Some give up one portion to oblivion and decay, some another; some dispense with the gods, some with their images; but few will consent to abandon entirely that which is their distinctive mark as a people of history. The philosophy of the Vedanta, as it is called, although a strange mixture of pantheism and sabeism, is the most refined (and we are told the most ancient) part of brahmanism, and this is fondly clutched by those who are ashamed of the mythic vulgarities of the common people. If its followers worship the Creator in the creature, it must at least be in the grandest forms of the visible creation; and rejecting the perishable substitutes of idolatry, they will only bow down before the sun, moon, and stars, that are the same to-day as when seen of old from the hill tops of Chaldea. Image-worship they do

not abrogate, but merely hand down to the ignorant and stolid, who require something tangible to fix their wandering imaginations.

But in the case of a delusion, the first confession, however restricted, is fatal. It forms a breach that is sure to become practicable in time. It was in vain for the free-thinking Hindoo to entrench himself in the mysticism of the Vedanta; for the "consonance of reason and human nature" which he proposed to seek, and for the sake of which he had abandoned idolatry, was not there to be found. He was soon followed to his citadel by bolder, perhaps even more ignorant inquirers, who detected at once the feebleness of his defences, and laughed at the foolishness of his wisdom. But here the revolutionists paused—and the pause continues to this moment. They had arrived at the extreme verge of Brahminism, and remained Hindoos only because they were nothing else. They threw up their arms wildly into space, demanding a religion. They invoked Christ and Mahomed alike They acknowledged the existence of Truth, and turned their yearning but sightless eyes through all creation in search of its rays.

Such are the Theophilanthropists, the "lovers of God and man,"—sceptics, infidels, if you will, but neither vedantaists nor puranaists—neither idolaters, nor pantheists, nor atheists. They are the advanced guard of the Hindoo mind. They spurn Brahminism, because it is irrational; but shrink from Christianity, because it is anti-national. They know that there is a God, and therefore a worship, and invite teachers and disputants of all creeds to enlighten and direct them. "That in the heart of a city (Calcutta) so long and so universally given to idolatry and all its mummeries," said a native Christian in a discourse to the Theophilanthropic Society, "such a respect-

able corporation of our educated gentry should be found anxious to discharge their religious obligations as men, and to cultivate those feelings of reverence and awe with which alone creatures can approach their Creator, is a pleasing and an auspicious omen of good things to come. * * * It is impossible to survey unconcerned, uninterested, the attempts making by those who are still incorporated in the Hindoo community to rise above the level of their superstitious countrymen, and to exhibit before an idolatrous generation, a semblance, however faint, of the grand principle of worshipping God with the mind and the spirit."

That this spirit will spread can hardly be doubted. The Hindoos, like the early European reformers, have the advantage of the Press, which fairly commenced its labours in native literature with the present century. They have also the advantage of the Anglo-Indian journals, which are not mere provincial newspapers, but the organs of a vastly more select society than is to be found at home, and exhibit generally the acumen and practical information of the European mind. But more than all, they have the advantage of a bolder policy on the part of their rulers, and a steadier and more rapid amelioration in the system of government. The new law, for instance, to which we have alluded, abrogating that institute of the brahmins (the offspring of a powerful and far-seeing intellect) which prohibits the descent of property to those who do not practise the ceremonial of the Hindoo faith, will cut away the main support of superstition, and therefore of the hideous and mischievous distinction of caste.

The gradually increasing desire to employ natives in offices of trust is another circumstance from which the most favourable augury may be drawn,—and the

rather that it is not a change forced upon government by the outcries of the philanthropists, but a policy which has naturally and indeed necessarily arisen from the progressive approximation—induced by education and example—of the Hindoo to the European character. Even during the short space since the death of Ramohun Roy, that intermixture which was the object of his philosophical aspirations of the moral qualities of the two races has sensibly begun.

From the earliest ages the precious metals have continued to flow into India from the rest of the world, and to be absorbed in her bosom as rivers are lost and disappear in the thankless sands of Maroosthali. But a great change is in course of operation. The barrenness and desolation were not of nature but of man, and the heretofore desert is now reclaimed day by day. India has been brought within a month's journey of Europe, and a thousand delusions and chimeras have disappeared by the mere force of approximation. The skill and capital of the west are eager to spread themselves over her still almost virgin soil, and new markets are opening everywhere to repay them. A great drama is acting in the eastern and southern seas, in which old nations are awakening from the enchanted slumber of ages, and the elements of new ones expanding in the wastes of the ocean. What part is India destined to play in this spectacle, at which all the gods of antiquity are looking on? Let England answer.

END OF VOL. I.

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